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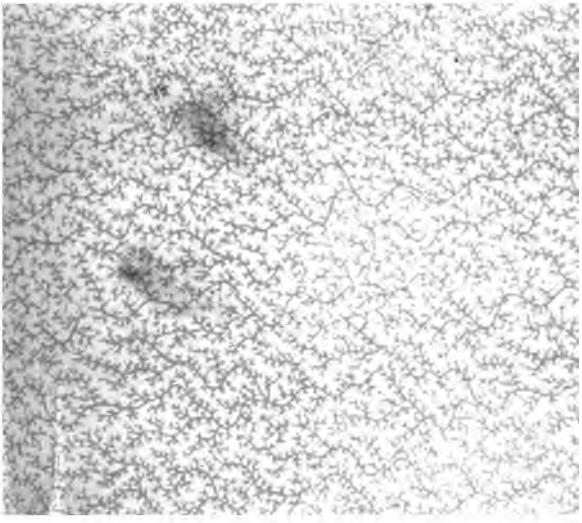

Henry Duyckinck
New York Sept. 18th

SERMONS,

BY THE

REVEREND SYDNEY SMITH, A. M.

LATE FELLOW OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD.

THE SECOND EDITION,

WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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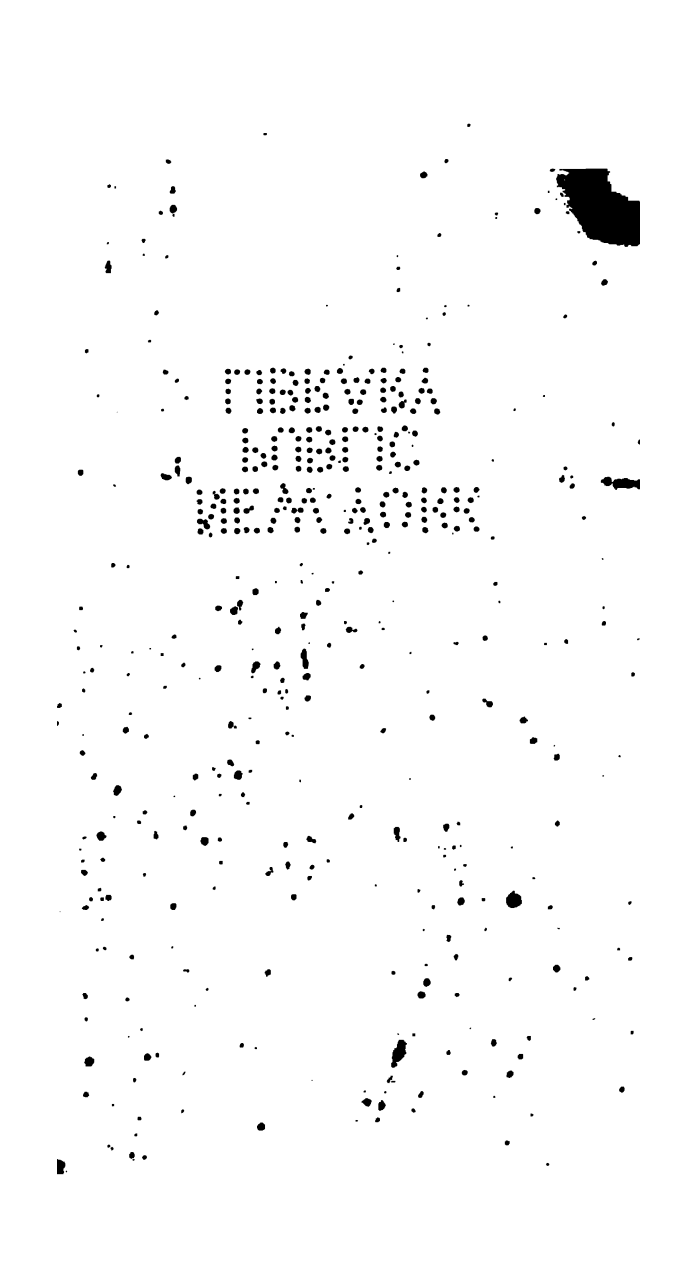
ПРИЧИНА
ЛЮДИ
МЕХАНІК

TO LORD WEBB SEYMOUR.

My Lord,

Accept the Second Edition of theſe Sermons, with the ſame ſentiments of Regard and Reſpect with which I offered you the Firſt; and believe me,

My Lord,

very ſincerely yours,

SYDNEY SMITH.

PREFACE.

I WROTE theſe Sermons in the exerciſe of my profeſſion, to do good; and for the ſame reaſon I make them public: That they cannot do much, I am well aware, becauſe they are haſty, and imperfect ſpecimens of an unpopular ſpecies of compoſition. Some little good, however, they may do; and why ſhould I give way to an immoral vanity, and do nothing in my vo-

cation, becauſe I cannot do much? The ſum of public opinion is made up of the ſentiments, as the ſum of public revenue is, from the contributions of individuals; and we become a rich, or a prudent nation, by adding together many trifling quotas of wiſdom, and of gold.

The worſt motives will, of courſe, be attributed to me by thoſe who read my political obſervations, and differ from me in opinion; and I ſhall be ſuppoſed to have felt a lit-

tle for that *ancient privilege of decimation*, which, it may be preſumed, would not be very highly reſpected in all the changes, and chances of a regenerated kingdom. Be it ſo. Let thoſe who are actuated by the motive, be deterred by the imputation. As long as God gives me life, and ſtrength, I will never ceaſe to attack, in the way of my profeſſion, and to the beſt of my abilities, any ſyſtem of principles injurious to the public happineſs, whether they be ſanctioned

by the voice of the many, or whether they be not; and may the ſame God take that unworthy life away, whenever I ſhrink from the contempt, and miſrepreſentation, to which my duty ſhall call me to ſubmit.

ON THE

LOVE OF OUR COUNTRY.

PSALM CXXXVII. V. 1.

By the waters of Babylon, we ſat down and wept, when we remembered thee, Oh Sion!

THIS beautiful Pſalm was written in commemoration of the Babyloniſh captivity, written, if we may judge, from the lively feelings it exhibits, ſoon after the period of that memorable event; and, in truth, it is not poſſible to read it

without emotion: It tells a tale of ſorrow with that ſimple melancholy which the heart can only feel, and the imagination never counterfeit: They hung up their harps on the willow trees, they could not ſing the ſongs of their God, for they were in captivity, and heavineſs of ſpirit oppreſſed them; they thought of their country, and ſat down by the waters of Babylon to weep.

Whence, it may be aſked, does this love of our country, this univerſal paſſion, proceed? Why does

the eye ever dwell with fondneſs upon the ſcenes of infant life? Why do we breathe with greater joy the breath of our youth? Why are not other ſoils as grateful, and other heavens as ſerene? Why does the ſoul of man ever cling to that earth where it firſt knew pleaſure and pain, and under the rough diſcipline of the paſſions was rouſed to the dignity of moral life? Is it only that our country contains our kindred and our friends? And is it nothing but a name for our ſocial affections? It cannot be this; the moſt friendleſs of human beings has

a country which he admires and extols, and which he would, in the ſame circumſtances, prefer to all others under heaven. Tempt him with the faireſt face of nature, place him by living waters, under ſhadowy cedars of Lebanon, open to his view all the gorgeous allurements of the climates of the ſun; he will love the rocks and deſerts of his childhood better than all theſe, and thou canſt not bribe his ſoul to forget the land of his nativity; he will ſit down and weep by the waters of Babylon, when he remembers thee, oh Sion.

But whether from this love of our kindred, or from habit, or from aſſociation, or from whatever more ſimple principle of our nature this love of our country proceed, it is of the higheſt importance to ſociety that its exiſtence ſhould be cheriſhed, and its energy directed aright; and if the duties which regulate the conduct of man to man be fit ſubjects for diſcuſſion in this place, that virtue which is founded upon the relation between ſocieties, and individuals, and includes the important, and extended intereſts of a whole people, muſt, in

preference to all others, merit diſcuſſion on my part, and attention on yours.

An attempt is often made to diſtinguiſh between moral, and Chriſtian ſubjects of inveſtigation; but no ſubject can be moral which is not Chriſtian. Chriſtianity guides us to another world, by ſhowing us how to act in this; in precepts more or leſs general, it enacts, and limits every human duty; the world is the theatre where we are to ſhow whether we are Chriſtians in profeſſion, or in deed; and there is no

action of our lives, which concerns the intereſts of others, in which we do not either violate, or obey a Chriſtian law. I cannot, therefore, illuſtrate a moral duty, without, at the ſame time, enforcing a precept of our religion.

The love of our country has, in the late ſcenes which have been acted in the world, been ſo often made a pretext for bad ambition, and ſo often given birth to crude, and ignorant violence, that many good men entertain no very great reliſh for the virtue, and ſome

are, in truth, tired, and diſguſted with the very name of it; but this mode of thinking, though very natural, and very common, is, above all others, that which goes to perpetuate error in the world. If good men are to cheriſh in ſecret the ideas, that any theory of duties we owe to our country is romantic, and abſurd, becauſe bad men and fooliſh men have made it an engine of crime, or found it a ſource of error; if there is to be this conſtant action, and reaction between extreme opinions; the ſentiments of mankind muſt be in eternal vi-

bration between one error, and another, and can never reſt upon the middle point of truth. Let it be our pride to derive our principles, not from times, and circumſtances, but from reaſon, and religion, and to ſtruggle againſt that mixture of indolence, and virtue which condemns the uſe, becauſe it will not diſcriminate the abuſe, which it abhors. In ſpite of the proſtitution of this venerable name, there is, and there ever will be, a Chriſtian patriotiſm, a great ſyſtem of duties which man owes to the ſum of human beings with whom

he lives: to deny it is folly; to neglect it is crime.

The love of our country has been ridiculed by ſome modern enthuſiaſts, as too narrow a field for the benevolence of an enlightened mind; they are for comprehending the whole human race in our affections, and deem any partiality ſhown to the particular country in which we happen to be born, as a narrow and unphiloſophical preference. Now, it would be difficult to ſay, whether complete ſelfiſhneſs, or univerſal philanthropy,

is the moſt likely to miſlead us from that ſound practical goodneſs, in which the beauty of Chriſtianity, and the merit of a Chriſtian, conſiſt. Our ſphere of thoughts has hardly any limits, our ſphere of action hardly any extent; we may ſpeculate on worlds, we muſt act in families, in diſtricts, and in kingdoms; and if we contract a diſtaſte for the good we can do, becauſe it is not equal to the good we can conceive, what is this but to ſacrifice deeds to words, and to rule our lives by maxims of the moſt idle and oſtentatious ſentiment? How can the re-

mote corners of the earth be influenced by your benevolence? Here are thouſands at home whom your generoſity may aid, your wiſdom teach, and your example guide; leave the taſk of ſuperintendence to Providence; and if you really wiſh to promote the univerſal good, you cannot do it more effectually than by fulfilling with cheerfulneſs and activity your humble, and ſubdivided lot. Oh Jeruſalem, ſays our Saviour, Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem! thou that killeſt the prophets, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth

her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Who would not believe that our Saviour himself felt, at the moment of this exclamation, that ardent love of his country, which it is the object of this modern doctrine to attack and deride?

One of the first passions by which the imagination of an able and a good youth is inflamed, is the love of his country; and he generally manages it in such a manner, as to convert it into a venial error rather than a virtue; I

ſay venial, becauſe thoſe errors which proceed from the good, and generous diſpoſitions of youth, deſerve indulgence, and are ſeldom perpetuated but when they are treated with harſhneſs. All the ſplendid actions performed in popular governments, give a very early bias to the mind; the peruſal of them forms the moſt material part of education; there is nothing which ranges youthful fancy on the ſide of government, and every thing which ranges it againſt it; there is very little to feed the imagination in the idea that men muſt be

reſtrained, and protected (above all things) from their own madneſs and folly; that they muſt be cheated and threatened into their own good; but a very little warmth, and elevation of thought will convert all the neceſſary operations of the beſt governments into crimes. Contribution is extortion, puniſhment is cruelty, management, and prudence are duplicity, and reſtraint is ſlaviſh ſubjugation; and hence, in the young, patriotiſm is often little elſe than an univerſal ſuſpicion, and abuſe of all government whatſoever. Many have the good

fortune to outgrow this childiſh propenſity; in others it is fixed for life, and exhibits inſtances of miſtaken, declamatory men, and of the moſt painful, and deplorable waſte of talents.

If ſuch be the errors of the young; the faults of thoſe more converſant with the world are, I am afraid, of a leſs favourable complexion. Whatever virtues may increaſe with age, the virtue of patriotiſm is not amongſt the number. It is in truth a matter of ſome wonder, that ſo many men of irreproachable ho-

neſty in private life, ſhould be ſo totally devoid of public virtue; nay, they are not only devoid of it in practice, but in theory. Every ſneer againſt the duties we owe to the public is received with complacency, and conſidered as proceeding from a thorough knowledge of life, and mankind; and to talk ſeriouſly of the love of our country, is political artifice, or youthful declamation. Nor are theſe public ſins at all infamous in the eyes of the world: Men of undoubted guilt move in the ſame circles they moved before, and with increaſed con-

ſideration, if their crimes be upon a large ſcale, and they have bartered morality for a dignified price.

My brethren, Whence is this? Decided, and immediate infamy follows treaſon to individual truſt. When *one* man ſuffers from fraud, and injuſtice, every honeſt heart is up in arms. Is diſhoneſty leſs diſhoneſty becauſe the number of the ſufferers is increaſed, and the evil ſubdivided amongſt a whole country? The limits of private fraud are narrow, and its effects of no

long duration: Public diſhoneſty may entail miſery upon a whole people, and the unborn infant may ſuffer for the laxity, and corruption of preceding times. Has our Saviour given us ſuch ſtrict rules for our conduct to each other, and left us to the free exerciſe of every bad, and licentious paſſion when we ſin only againſt the public? Is it againſt narrow, and partial crimes that he has threatened the wrath of God, and flung open the doors of heaven to magnificent villany, and boundleſs pollution? He who ſins againſt the public, has no true

religion of God; he has no honour, which is the religion of the world; he abſtains from crimes againſt individuals, becauſe he knows that loſs of reputation is loſs of intereſt, and gives looſe to his baſeneſs when profit invites, and impunity permits; if he lived in worſe times, he would defraud his neighbour, he would forfeit his word; his pretended virtues are maxims of convenience; he has no guardian conſcience, no protecting principle; there waves not in his breaſt that flaming ſword which turns every way to drive off that

which is evil, and to guard the path to the tree of life.

Theſe remarks have often been made as arguments for political change. Can I wiſh for political change? the ſound is mournful to my mind. Can I wiſh that more gallant Engliſh, Chriſtian, men, ſhould fall? Can I wiſh that more good families ſhould be made wretched, that tears ſhould break forth again on all faces? Do I wiſh to ſee again the ancients, and counſellors of the earth, dignified and learned men, looking to me for

charity, and eating before my face the ſlender bread of exile, and affliction? Can I wiſh to unhappy Europe (which ſees now, perhaps, the green branch of peace), can I wiſh her freſh ſorrow, and that the battle be carried on for ſeven other years, with the noiſe of the warrior, and with garments rolled in blood? No, it is not for political change I wiſh; it is moral, and religious change for which I am pleading; I am intreating you to hold yourſelves as accountable to God, and your conſcience, in every public as in every private tranſac-

tion of your lives; to perform thoſe duties which may affect the country at large, with the ſame delicate, and inflexible juſtice you would exhibit, on ordinary occaſions, and not to be baſe, becauſe you can be baſe with impunity. Theſe are the points I am preſſing upon your attention. I would have you probe to the quick, every, the leaſt motive to public fraud, and to public corruption, even though the wrong you do, ſhould be divided, and ſubdivided amongſt millions, and millions of people. Oh God, ſays the prophet King, who ſhall enter in-

to thy holy tabernacle? Even he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart.

It is impoſſible, in the ſhort compaſs of an addreſs from the pulpit, to attempt any thing like a methodical claſſification of the various duties we owe to our country. Thoſe which are the moſt frequently neglected, or the leaſt frequently inſiſted upon, are all on which I ſhall pretend to touch.

There is a crime committed againſt the country, in times of its

adverſity, which I confeſs appears to me to be of the moſt ſordid and ſelfiſh nature; that men who derive not only protection, but opulence, from a country in the days of its proſperity, ſhould, upon any appearance of alarm, be ever ready to retire with perſon, and property to other countries, is a principle ſubverſive of all political union whatſoever. What nation could exiſt for a moment, if, in the day of danger and war, when the kingdoms were gathered together againſt her, ſhe ſaw her treaſures diſperſed, and her children fled? Are we not all

linked together by language, by birth, by habits, by opinions, by virtues, for worſe, for better, for glory, for ſhame, for peace, for war, for plenty, for want? Will you ſhudder to interweave your deſtiny with the deſtiny of your country? And can you poſſibly think of your own ſecurity when your land is weary, and fainting becauſe of her great afflictions? And when all whom you know, and love can die, and ſuffer, would you alone live, and rejoice? If I forget thee, Oh Jeruſalem! let my right hand forget her cunning: If I do not re-

member thee in the time of my trouble, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

My brethren, it is ſometimes good to be content with doing little; the great and ſplendid occaſions in which a man can benefit his country are few; the humble duties by which her benefit may be advanced are of daily occurrence; ſuch, among others, is the duty of example: it is not enough to aſcertain that actions be innocent as to ourſelves, they muſt be innocent as to the effect they

produce upon others; the conſequences of ſome levity, or omiſſion to you may be unimportant; but they are not unimportant to thoſe who are guilty of the ſame thing, becauſe you are, and will be guilty of it with far other talents, other habits, and other diſpoſitions, than yourſelf. This kind of patriotiſm is, I am afraid, rare enough; indeed, men great in talents and rank, found ſomewhat of their reputation upon not doing what the reſt of the world do, by which the one would have their ſuperior talents inferred, and the other their

ſuperior condition. Such, I am afraid, is the unworthy ſhame of being thought capable of attending to minutiæ, which robs us of the invaluable benefit of example.

I cannot conclude this ſubject of love to our country, without animadverting to that ſpecies of it, which conſiſts in a firm, and ſpirited combination againſt the unjuſt aggreſſion, and dangerous inſolence of a foreign power; and in all the hiſtory of ſucceſsful reſiſtance to outrageous tyranny (a ſhort and beautiful page in the annals of

man), there is no inſtance more marked, and more illuſtrious, than that which this empire has ſo re-cently diſplayed to the world. Permit me rapidly to ſurvey the perils through which we have paſſ-ed; it cannot but promote a ſpirit of piety amongſt us, and increaſe our confidence in the protection of God.

The whole force of the moſt powerful people in Europe was guided to our deſtruction by ex-quiſite talents, unſhackled from the fear of God, or man. Their

warlike ſpirit was blown into an enthuſiaſm, which Mahomet could never kindle in his ſavage Arabians, when he came forth, like theſe modern fanatics, to blot out the name of Chriſt, and to dim the glory of Chriſtendom; onwards they went, deceiving the ſimple, and conquering the brave; bringing to their foes death, to their friends freedom worſe than death; but plundering, inſulting, and confounding all: Men's hearts were melted in the midſt of them; there was neither council, nor conduct in Europe; a deep-ſeated earth-

quake ſeemed to heave up the baſis of civil life, and the tribunals of men, and the thrones of monarchs, and the temples of God, ſhook to the loweſt atom of their ſtructure. What was the firm, and dignified, and manly conduct of this country? we ſtood up for human happineſs, and ſpurning from us the luxuries of peace, unfurled a banner to the nations, under which the good, and the honourable, and the wiſe, might range; and with as much moderation as ſecurity would permit, and with as much courage as man could diſ-

play, through internal diſaffection, and through mutiny, and through open rebellion, and through two awful viſitations of famine, for ſeven long years, we have maintained this great fight, till now at length the pride of our enemy is abated, and his devices confounded; confounded by our magnanimity in doing, and ſuffering, by the intrepid widom of thoſe men who ſway our national councils, by the pity of Almighty God; for if God had not pitied us, we, like the poor unhappy ſtrangers within our gates, ſhould have been living broken-hearted, in

foreign lands, upon the bread of tears, and in the garb of charity, and our families, which now live together in peace, and unity, would have been ſcattered abroad far and near, never upon this earth to meet again.

My brethren, let this dreadful idea awaken in your minds a lively gratitude to Heaven. Think ſeriouſly of the time yet left to you for ſalvation; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men. So may the bleſſings of God ſtill be heaped on the heads of our people,

this evil time ſhall paſs away, we ſhall ſee golden days after our long tribulations; the arts of peace, and the ſpirit of order, will revive upon the earth; and every man will live under the ſhadow of his vine, and his fig-tree; there will be no complaining, no leading to captivity, in our ſtreets; we ſhall not be driven to a foreign land; nor will it ever be our fate to ſit down and weep by the waters of Babylon, when we remember thee, Oh Zion!

ON SCEPTICISM.

PSALM XXXI. V. 20.

Let the lying lips be put to ſilence, which cruelly, diſdainfully, and maliciouſly, ſpeak againſt the righteous.

To neglect thoſe floating imputations and popular calumnies, which are in circulation againſt any ſyſtem either moral, religious, or political, appears to me rather magnanimous, than wiſe, and to ſavour more of a generous contempt for danger, than of prudent precau-

tion againſt it. Bold aſſertions, and ſpecious invectives often repeated, begin at laſt to be credited; we hear the calumny ſo often united to its object, that the mention of the one, almoſt mechanically introduces the notion of the other; and we are betrayed into dangerous prejudices, rather by a principle of aſſociation, than a deciſion of the judgment.

There is too, beſides, a faſhion in thinking as in every thing elſe, and the giddy part of mankind muſt ever appear in the neweſt philoſophy,

and the moſt admired ſyſtem of ethics, or depravity, which the day has to exhibit. In an age of devotion, they lead in hypocriſy, regulate the punctilios of ſupplication, and adjuſt all the modes, and minutiæ of piety: In an age of philoſophy, they are the firſt to diſbelieve in the immortality of the ſoul, to diſcredit the evidence of their ſenſes, and to doubt, diſcredit, and deride every thing elſe, which the rules of faſhionable ſcepticiſm may permit, or require.

If there be any truth in this,

and if the world be led to ſuch unreaſonable concluſions from ſuch unreaſonable cauſes, it is important to remark the modes of thinking of the times, and to ſelect for animadverſion, thoſe trite but prevailing opinions which endanger the well-being of ſociety.

* The number of thoſe who diſ-

---

* I confeſs, theſe theologico-political ſceptics, or the worſt, and moſt noiſy of them, have always appeared to me to be animated by the ſpirit of Benedictine, or Franciſcan friars, to be mere monks of atheiſm, and democracy. I ſee the ſame ſtupid blindneſs,

believe in Chriſtianity, and who openly avow that diſbelief, is great, and I believe increaſing: Men of this ſtamp, in quitting the religion in which they have been educated, have certainly made no partial abjuration of its tenets; the charity and moderation which it inculcates, have ſhared the fate of all its other principles, and every trace of them is moſt thoroughly effaced.

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the ſame extravagant zeal, the ſame malicious cruelty, characterize the theological tonſure of one age, and the political tonſure of another.

It is a leading object with these men, to bring into disrepute the character of Christianity, of its teachers and adherents; and one mode by which they effect it is, by attaching to all mention of these various subjects, the ideas of intolerance, bigotry, and narrowness of mind. The opposite virtues they ascribe to their own sect, as candour, liberality, the spirit of discussion, and an exemption from every human prejudice; and such (as I have before remarked) are the effects of invective, and assertion frequently repeated, that those

who have not formed to themſelves preciſe notions of what theſe operative terms imply, and who have not learned the neceſſity of aſcertaining their due application by a ſteady appeal to facts, are apt to admit both the juſtice of the imputations which this ſect of philoſophers make, and of the pretenſions to which they aſpire.

To the youthful, every thing which appears open, and generous, is ſo agreeable, every thing which conveys the idea of narrowneſs, concealment, or deceit, is ſo ob-

noxious, that they literally become aſhamed of their religion, and feel abaſhed at their faith, before theſe men of liberal ſentiment and extended inquiry.

It is very eaſy to ſee the pernicious conſequences to which this will lead; the horror which a young man of that age feels, is the horror of being unknown, and unadmired; he cannot wait to think of diſtant conſequences, the eclat of diſbelief is too tempting for him, and he becomes a deiſt; a little time elapſes, and from the ſame

vanity of extending (or appearing to extend) inveſtigation, he begins to call in queſtion a ſuperintending Providence, and a ſenſe of right, and wrong; and deſcending through a long train of theories, and ſyſtems, from bad, to worſe, he ſubſides into a ſtate of complete ſcepticiſm upon every queſtion whatſoever. Is this to be ſeen without affliction? A young man ſtanding on the threſhold of life, and juſt going into all the buſineſs of the world, with a heart in which every principle of right, and wrong is thoroughly ſhaken, and impaired?

If not deſtined for great offices in public life, yet he is a brother, a ſon, a friend; he is to be a huſband, and a father of children; ſome muſt truſt him, and ſome muſt love him. Call it bigotry, and cover theſe notions with mockery and deriſion; but I ſay it would be better for this young man, that the work of death were going on within him, that the ſtrength, and the roſes of his youth were fading away, and that he were waſting down to the tombs of his anceſtors, wept by his friends, and pitied by the world.

If ſuch then be their pernicious effects, let us examine on what foundation theſe high-minded pretences reſt, and whether there be any ſet of men who have a right to conſider themſelves as ſo far advanced beyond their fellow-creatures in the ſpirit of wiſdom, and to look down upon the reſt of mankind with anger, and contempt.

In ſpeaking of thoſe who diſbelieve in Chriſtianity, I am very far from including in my obſervations every perſon of this deſcription.

The truth of Chriſtianity reſts upon its own internal evidence, and the evidence of hiſtory. It is impoſſible to account for the aberrations of human reaſon; evidence of the ſtrongeſt kind is daily excepted to by men of unqueſtionable talents, and ſincerity; to us the proofs of the truth of our religion appear manifeſt, and ſtrong; that they ſhall not appear ſo to others is certainly poſſible, becauſe every irrational concluſion is poſſible.

Whoever has examined the que-

ſtion with that candid and inveſtigating ſpirit which its extreme importance demands; whoever reſpects, with an amiable, and principled modeſty, the common belief of mankind on this topic, however it may differ from his own particular perſuaſion; whoever would rather conceal what he conſiders to be an exemption from prejudice, and a proof of ſuperior talent in himſelf, than weaken any one religious reſtraint, or impair any one virtuous principle in the boſom of any one human being; whoever believes it poſſible for

a Chriſtian to be thoroughly impreſſed with the truth of his religion, without forfeiting all pretenſions to ſincerity, to talent, and to learning; againſt ſuch a man I am not now lifting up my voice; may God enlighten his darkneſs, and convert his heart! But it is that ſect of men I am endeavouring to ſingle out, who, in all the common intercourſe of life, obtrude upon you their blaſphemy, and their ſcepticiſm, who pant to tell you they have no God; and are reſtleſs till they have convinced you they have trampled under

foot every pleaſant hope, and every decent reſtriction in life; who think that a few filly pleaſantries, and ſlender arguments, are a ſufficient preparation to decide on theſe proofs of a future life; men who (while they think they have monopolized all liberal ſentiment, and acute inquiry) have made a faction in morals, who are perſecuting in their toleration, bigotted in their liberality, and furious in their moderation. Theſe are the men who have made the very name of philoſophy a term of reproach; who have been the cauſe, that the

plea of liberality cannot now be heard without a ſneer of ſuſpicion; theſe are they, who have deſtroyed, in the maſs of mankind, all veneration for the labours of ſpeculative wiſdom; who have really put back the world, and diminiſhed every rational hope of improvement; and by bringing the whole healing art into diſrepute, have made men cleave to their ulcers, and their pains, and ſhudder at the hand which is held out to offer them relief.

In their depreciation of religion,

and the religious, theſe ſectaries make a very copious uſe of hiſtory; they can from thence ſhew, that there was a period when men were utterly debarred from all freedom of opinion upon religious ſubjects, when this intolerance was manifeſted in the moſt cruel perſecutions, by an artful, and ambitious prieſthood, who governed, and who pillaged the world.

Theſe facts may be true; but they do not juſtify the inferences which are drawn from them. If every thing is to be conſidered as

bad in itſelf which is capable of being abuſed; liberty, wealth, learning, and power, ought rather to be the objects of our averſion than our choice. Every good principle has been at times perverted; every good inſtitution has been gradually elaborated from the ſufferings and afflictions of the world: man, doubly wretched, ſlowly toils on to perfection, earning his bread by the ſweat of his brow, and his wiſdom by the ſorrows of his heart.

But what, it may be aſked, have theſe hiſtorical imputations, theſe

invectives of rolls, and records, to do with the principle, and practice of the preſent day; a day in which the pretenſions of every claſs of men are kept in due bounds by the enlightened condition of all, and every one is left to worſhip God according to his own ideas of truth? The object is not to ſhow what eſtabliſhments have been, and what Chriſtianity has been, in dark ages, but to ſhow the natural ſpirit, and tendency of both. If it can be ſhown that there is any thing in the Chriſtian religion neceſſarily connected with bigotry, and

intolerance, this objection would be pertinent, and powerful; but to ſuppoſe that a Chriſtian is a bigot now, becauſe there were very few Chriſtians who were not ſo three hundred years ago, is to ſuppoſe the exiſtence of principles and cauſes, which every cool, unprejudiced mind perceives to have long ago loſt their influence upon mankind. We have nothing to do but to make this malicious anachroniſm more general, and we ſhall ſay, that natural philoſophy is conjecture, the medical art empiriciſm, and law a ſyſtem of inge-

nious depredation, becauſe there have been periods in which theſe ſciences were all expoſed to ſuch imputations.

The fact is (and ſuch I believe to be the opinion of every man who loves truth more than party, let his religious opinions be what they may), that a diſbelief, not only in Chriſtianity, but in a ſuperintending Providence, is faſt travelling down from the cell of the metaphyſician to the common haunts, and ordinary ſcenes of life; that men are giving up the prac-

tical morality of the goſpel, and the true, and wholeſome terror of a God, who have no beautiful, and claſſical theory of morals to ſubſtitute in its place, but who, if they are not Chriſtians, muſt be wild beaſts. Theſe are the dangers which now threaten us; we have not at preſent to fear that we ſhall be manacled by ſuperſtition, but that the golden chain which reaches from heaven to earth, ſhould be broken in ſunder, and not one link of it again be found.

If philoſophy be a love of know-

ledge, evinced by an ardent, and able purſuit of it, there can ſurely be nothing to exclude the firm believer in Chriſtianity from every honourable diſtinction which this appellation can convey. The ſubject which engages his attention, is unqueſtionably ſuperior in importance to every other which can engage the wit of man; the proſecution of it involves wide hiſtorical reſearch, much curious, and delicate examination of evidence, much labour, and many vigils of the mind; and he who gets up from theſe ſtudies a ſincere Chriſtian, is, for

ought I know, as much a philoſopher as the hoary atheiſt who has ſtudied away his ſoul, has elaborated his theory of annihilation from whole libraries, and given up one life, to diſcover there is no other.

A great many human beings muſt take their religion upon truſt; few have leiſure, and few talents, for ſpeculative inquiries; but let me aſk, which is the more commendable and noble? To believe in Chriſtianity without proof, or to diſbelieve in it without proof? A

ıodeſt coincidence with received
pinions above our faculties, or an
ffected contempt of them? Whe-
ıer there is a more diſguſting
ɔectacle than arrogant mediocrity?
Vhether we cannot more eaſily al-
ɔw for that inclination which bends
ɔwards a religion of comfortable
romiſe, than that which leans to
ſyſtem of cold deſpondency?
Vhether there is not ſomething
ıleaſant in ſeeing our fellow-crea-
ures cling to a faith which ar-
anges the world, and cheers it?
\nd if it is not afflicting to behold
hat depraved appetite for miſery

and deſpair, which induces men to yield up their aſſent to a ſyſtem of incredulity, without being acquainted in the ſmalleſt degree with the reaſons on which it is founded?

Thoſe who are ſo fond of preferring the charge of bigotry againſt the Chriſtians, ſhould remember how intimately this attachment to our opinions is interwoven in our conſtitution, and how much more likely it is to diſplay itſelf upon ſubjects of ſuch extreme importance as that of religion; whoever has made Chriſtianity his rule of

action in this world, and his hope in the next, whoſe original conviction has been ſtrengthened by habit, and warmed by devotion, and can bear in this tenor of mind, to hear that he has been believing in a fable, that his labour is loſt, and his hope illuſive; whoever can bear to hear theſe aſſertions, and to diſcuſs them without tranſgreſſing the rules of candour, poſſeſſes the love of truth in a degree truly inimitable, for he riſks all his happineſs in purſuit of it.

But if, in ſpite of this plea of

mitigation, the want of candour be ſo offenſive in a Chriſtian, what ſhall we ſay to that moſt extraordinary of all characters, a bigotted ſceptic? who reſiſts the force of proof where he has every temptation to be convinced, who ought to ſigh for refutation, and to bliſs the man who has reaſoned him to ſilence? Bigotry in him is the pure unadulterated vice; it is not the fear of loſing an opinion on which his happineſs depends, but the fear of loſing an opinion, merely becauſe it is an opinion; and this is the very eſſence of obſtinacy, and pride.

Where men pretend to nothing, the world are indulgent to their faults; but it well behoves thoſe who lord it in word, and thought over the reſt of mankind, that they be conſiſtent in their conduct, and perfectly free from thoſe faults which they ſo liberally impute to others. Ignorance, bigotry, and illiberality, are bad enough in their ſimple ſtate; but when men of ſlender information, narrow views, and obſtinate diſpoſitions, inſult the feelings, and deſpiſe the underſtandings, of ſuch of their fellow-creatures who have fixed their faith

in an amiable, and benevolent religion, we are called upon by common ſenſe, and by common ſpirit, to reſiſt, and to extinguiſh this dynaſty of fools.

To thoſe great men on whom God has breathed a larger portion of his ſpirit, and ſent into the world to enlarge the empire of talent, and of truth, mankind will ever pay a loyal obedience; they are our natural leaders, they are the pillars of fire which brighten the darkneſs of the night, and make ſtraight the paths of the wilderneſs, they

muſt move on before us; but while we give looſe to our natural veneration for great talents, let us not miſtake laxity, for liberality, the indelicate boldneſs of a froward diſpoſition, for the graſping ſtrength, and impulſive curioſity of an original mind; let us ſteadily diſcountenance the efforts of bad men, and of ſhallow men, to darken the diſtinctions between right, and wrong; to bring into ridicule, and contempt, the religion of their country; and to gratify ſome popular talent at the expence of the deareſt intereſts of mankind.

Bigotry, and intolerance are their terms of alarm; and ſome foundation for alarm, in truth, there may be; but the danger is, not that the world ſhould again fall under the dominion of men who will dictate a peculiar belief, but of men who will prohibit all belief, who will enforce incredulity with monaſtic rigour, and annex a papal infallibility to the deciſions of the ſceptical ſchool. The danger is, that having eſcaped from one age of darkneſs, where nothing was called in queſtion, we ſhall fall into another, where every thing is diſcuſſed;

that having reduced the power of one order of men who would have hindered us from doubting, we ſhall have to ſtruggle with another who would hinder us from deciding; that the fires of perſecution may be lighted up to ſupport an orthodox pyrrhoniſm, and to check the hereſy of piety; and that any poſitive belief in any religion, may be juſt as criminal in the nineteenth century, as to doubt of the real preſence, or any other catholic dogma, was in the eleventh.

To that ſmall, but invaluable

claſs of men who have ſteadily kept down the natural tendency to violence, and who have ſuch an exquiſite tact for truth, that they can extract it pure from the fury, and miſrepreſentation of all parties, are we to look for our barrier againſt the danger with which we appear to be threatened. To ſuch men, this madneſs of incredulity, and luſt of doubt, will be a matter of uniform reſiſtance, and profound regret; they will know that the path aſſigned to human reaſon, though lofty, is limited, and they will ſigh over her preſent exceſs, as well as

her original imbecility; as the ſteady friends of human nature they will never believe that the cauſe of real improvement is advanced by men who are neither profound in the theory of religion, nor pure in its practice; againſt ſuch men they will bend the brow, and ſhut the heart, and exert the real authority they poſſeſs in the world, "To put to ſilence the lips "which cruelly, diſdainfully, and "deſpitefully, ſpeak againſt the "righteous."

THE POOR MAGDALENE.

PREACHED BEFORE THE SCOTCH MAGDALENE SOCIETY.

LUKE, chap. vii. v. 48.

Daughter, thy ſins are forgiven thee.

THE little narrative of which this text is a part, preſents ſo beautiful a picture of profound ſorrow, and virtuous humiliation, that I am ſure you will excuſe me, if I give it you more in detail.

" Behold a woman in the city,

" which was a ſinner, when ſhe knew
" that Jeſus ſat at meat, ſtood be-
" hind him weeping, and began to
" waſh his feet with her tears, and
" did wipe them with the hairs of
" her head, and kiſſed his feet, and
" anointed them with ointment; and
" he turned to the woman, and ſaid
" to Simon, Seeſt thou this wo-
" man? I entered into thine houſe,
" thou gaveſt me no water for my
" feet; but ſhe hath waſhed my feet
" with her tears, and dried them
" with the hairs of her head. Thou
" gaveſt me no kiſs. but this wo-
" man, ſince the time I came in, hath

" not ceaſed to kiſs my feet. Mine
" head with oil thou didſt not a-
" noint; but this woman hath a-
" nointed my head with ointment.
" Daughter, thy ſins are forgiven
" thee."

There is ſomething in the ſorrow of this poor, unknown woman, which is touching, and ſublime. A delicate ſpirit, abaſhed with the wiſdom and purity of Jeſus, a lowlineſs which forbade lamentation, a remorſe which precluded hope, a heart broken with public ſcorn, and inward ſhame. She ſaid nothing, ſhe had no hope

of mercy, or dream of ſalvation, for her ſoul; but giving a looſe to that enthuſiaſm for the good, from which the worſt of our ſpecies are not wholly exempt; and remembering, perhaps, the days when ſhe was innocent and happy; ſhe never ceaſes to waſh the feet of Jeſus with her tears, and to dry them with the hairs of her head.

Jeſus did not reject this poor creature; he forgave her ſins; and you bleſs the mercy of your Saviour. Bear then in mind this picture, and imitate that mercy which you love.

The poor women in whoſe behalf I am this day to plead, preſent themſelves before you with the deepeſt ſhame, and the moſt profound contrition: they are fully ſenſible of their unworthineſs; they would kiſs the ground on which you tread; they would waſh your feet with their tears: have mercy on them, for they are wretched; and if you cannot forgive their ſins, at leaſt alleviate their ſorrows.

Before I enter at length upon this ſubject, it may be neceſſary to ſtate to you, that the principal ob-

ject with the Society, now called the Magdalene Society, is to reclaim unhappy, and deluded females from a vicious courſe of life, to inure them to habits of induſtry, to reconcile them to their families, and reſtore them to a ſenſe of religion. It is nearly two years ſince this Society was firſt founded; and during that time forty-four women have been admitted to the benefit of the inſtitution. You will be curious to know the reſult, and I will lay it before you with the greateſt candour. In ſome women the habits of vice have been found ſo

deeply fixed, that it was not poſſible to eradicate them; ſuch have of courſe been diſmiſſed from the aſylum, though by no means wholly abandoned: The ſalvation of a fellow-creature has been always deemed by thoſe who ſuperintend this inſtitution, as much too ſacred an object to be given up, while activity could ſuggeſt a ſingle effort, which reaſon could ſanction.

But I have the greateſt pleaſure in aſſuring you, that the cares of the Society have been eminently ſucceſsful in by far the greateſt

number of inſtances; and that many poor women who would (but for this) have dragged on a wretched and ignominious life, have been reconciled to their parents, received into reputable families as ſervants, and placed, by a ſenſe of their paſt miſery, and preſent comfort, beyond the rational probability of relapſe. There are at preſent twenty women in the houſe; and the frequent application for admiſſion, from the moſt miſerable objects poſſible, which the contracted ſtate of their funds have compelled the Society to reject, has occaſioned

this appeal to the charity of the public.

It muſt not be diſſembled, that there are ſome reſpectable, and well-meaning people unfavourable to this inſtitution, from a conception that it encourages vice; that women, who have ſo far forgotten every principle of virtue, ought to be abandoned to their fate; and that to take ſo lively an intereſt in the ſituation, and circumſtances of ſuch depraved characters, is neither proper in itſelf, nor encouraging to thoſe who are virtuous, and good.

But if it were true, that a facility to eſcape from the miſeries of vice, operates as an inducement to crime, are we wholly to exclude all conſideration for the individual ſufferer, and render wretchedneſs coeval with life, for the ſake of public example? Vice does not originate from computation of probabilities, and accurate adjuſtment of future good, and evil, but from ignorance, weak notions of duty, bad government of the mind, and dangerous ſituation.

Let us advert to the real facts.

A poor young creature, allured from the country, perhaps, by idle dreams of wealth, and ambition, is placed in the middle of a large town, far removed from her parents, and her friends, and expoſed to every temptation which the moſt infamous artifices can ſuggeſt. Bad muſt he be indeed, who would think to palliate a crime here in the face of God, and the people; but feeling, as I do, moſt deeply for the poor women, whoſe cauſe I have undertaken, it is my duty to bring to your remembrance, thoſe circumſtances which fixed their ill-

fated deſtiny, and made them what they are, the daughters of affliction; degraded; ſuppliants to God, and man.

It is no imaginary picture I paint to you, but the crimes of real life. I repeat again, that the moſt atrocious artifices are daily put in practice againſt the lower claſs of women, and by men in whom religion, education, and rank in life, ought to have infuſed far other principles of honour, dignity, and compaſſion; who, beſides all other conſiderations, ought to know, that

he who ſacrifices the innocence of a woman, who looks up to her character, and her labour for honeſt ſupport, gives up a human creature to want, and to crime, to untimely depravity, and to early death.

The tender age of many of theſe poor creatures, is a circumſtance which pleads powerfully to your compaſſion. The neceſſary ſacrifice of prudence to poverty, is the ſource of many vices, as it ought to be of much indulgence to the lower claſſes of mankind. At the very period when the child requires

moſt the advice, and vigilance of the mother, ſhe is compelled to quit her home for new, and dangerous ſcenes, and is left to her own fatal guidance, at the moſt perilous moment of life. There are women in this Society of fifteen and ſixteen years of age, fit objects truly of that pious compaſſion they have moved, and that fatherly protection they have received. Thus, while the human body ſlowly toils on to its laſt ſtature, and the ſoul late unfolds its power, and its might, every bad paſſion is ſwift to increaſe, and before nature has finiſh-

ed her work, vice has ſunk it to decay.

You feel leſs pity for theſe women, perhaps, becauſe you aſſociate to their former life, riot, extravagance, and mad luxury; rather aſſociate to it the feelings of infamy, of hunger, of remorſe, of houſeleſs, friendleſs, and unpitied want. The ſufferings of the reſpectable poor are bad enough; but if you will fathom to the loweſt the miſery of our nature, look to the union of poverty, and vice. Behold the dying proſtitute, ſo joyous once, and

ſo innocent, and ſo good, behold her in ſome diſmal receſs of a crowded city, ſlowly yielding up her life to ſorrow, and to pain. So lies this poor forgotten creature, without the bleſſing of parents, or the voice of kinſmen, or the ſweet counſel of friends; and when you ſee her face pale with weakneſs, and her limbs withered with diſeaſe, and her dwelling loathſome from want, forget not that ſhe has yet a ſorrow which no human eye can reach. The remembrance of a miſpent life has broke her heart; and though ſhe ſend forth no plain-

tive voice, and though ſhe ſhed no idle tear, ſhe is maſtered by an unknown ſpirit within, and ſinks ſadly down to her long, and laſting home.

To ſuch ſcenes as theſe, ſound policy, and genuine piety, unite to call your attention; to educate, to reclaim, to diffuſe morality and religion, is the moſt comprehenſive wiſdom, and the trueſt philanthropy. If laws give efficacy to morals, morals give efficacy to laws; and it is rather, perhaps, in the diſpoſition *to obey*, than in the power to en-

act, that the ſecurity for human happineſs conſiſts.

The number of theſe deluded women is ſo great, and their ſufferings, in proceſs of time, ſo lamentable, that, conſidered by themſelves, they become an object of political interference, and Chriſtian compaſſion; conſidered as to its general effects, the increaſe or diminution of this ſpecies of profligacy, becomes of the higheſt civil importance. Who, then, ſhall ſet bounds to thoſe labours which go to increaſe the ſum of virtue in

a ſtate? or who ſhall aſſign the preciſe limits where the work of reformation ſhall ſtop, and the bad be abandoned? If education have been tried in vain, we will ſet to work the great engine of repentance, which reſts upon experience, and model afreſh the human mind ſoftened by affliction. The fears of mankind are in general reſorted to, rather than their ductility; and it is more common to puniſh than reclaim: A ſuppoſed neceſſity alone can juſtify this rough amelioration of mankind; but the voluntary labours of the truly good and re-

ſpectable men who preſide over this Society, ſhow you that no ſuch neceſſity exiſts, and deſerve your warmeſt protection, as they ſubſtitute for ſeverity, perſuaſion, and effect the pureſt end by the gentleſt means.

The great attention which has always been paid to reconcile reclaimed children to their parents, is a very pleaſing feature in the conduct of this charity. The protection, and countenance of the parent gives ſtability to the new virtue of the child; and the renewal

of this endearing relation is ſtrictly congenial to our moſt lively feelings.

A young female was received ſome time ſince into the Society, who, in conſequence of the infamous character ſhe had incurred, had been wholly abandoned by her poor, but reſpectable parents, for above four years. You all know the extreme care with which the poor people attend to the religious, and moral education of their children in this part of the world; and will, I am ſure, in the good-

neſs of your hearts, anticipate the feelings of two poor villagers as they ſpeculated on the future proſpects of their late beloved inmate, their fears for her ſafety, their humble ambition, their hope that they had not in vain ſuffered want for her improvement, their ardent prayer to Almighty God for their child. Not to dwell upon intermediate ſcenes, by the interference of the Society, the father agreed to receive his daughter, and they were brought together; the appearance of each juſt before they met, was wonderfully impreſſive.

In the child there were marks of the deepeſt contrition, and humility; a ſenſe of joy, at the idea of ſeeing her father, mingled with a perturbation which bordered on delirious wildneſs. In the poor man there was an honeſt ſhame at the diſgrace which his daughter had incurred, not wholly devoid of anger; but it was eaſy to ſee how much his compaſſion ruled over every other feeling of his mind. Such was the intereſting appearance of theſe poor people before they met; but when they *ſaw each* other, there was no ſhame,

there was no dread, there was no anger, there was no contrition; but there were tears, and cries, and loud ſobbings, and convulſive embraces, and the father wept over his daughter, and loved her; and they that ſaw this, bear witneſs how bleſſed a thing it is to ſnatch a human ſoul from perdition, to ſhow the paths of God to poor ſinners, and to ſhower down the glories of virtue, and religion on the laſt, and the loweſt of mankind.

Will you then ſuffer me to plead

to you in vain, in ſuch a cauſe as this? Will you ſuffer ſuch a noble and rational charity to periſh now at its birth? Will you turn back theſe half reclaimed women, when you have taught them the full meaſure of their ſin, and wretchedneſs? Or, if a human being ſay to you, I am doing wrong; I am ſinning againſt God, and man; I am wretched; I know not where to turn; pity me, and ſhow me the paths of eternal life; will you drive back the penitent to her ſins, and rage with all the ſeverity of law, and cenſure, when you have

refuſed the benefit of preventive inſtruction?

I could ſpeak to you for hours on this charity; but I have the firmeſt reliance on that rational goodneſs, ſo characteriſtic of this country, and before which no true object of miſery ever preſented itſelf in vain. Let me beg of you to take the nature, and views of this Society into your moſt ſerious conſideration, and only to promote them as in your cool judgment you ſhall deem them important to the intereſt of true religion, and

ſocial order, and ſanctioned, as I moſt firmly believe them to be, by every moral probability of ſucceſs.

But do not truſt to the faded impreſſions of repreſentation: Scenes of moral improvement are always gratifying, and always inſtructive: view with your own eyes the ſtrict order, and decency which pervades this inſtitution; converſe with the humble penitents, and hear what they will tell you of the horrors from which they have been reſcued, of their preſent comfort, and their hopes of immortality revived. The

moſt delicate, and amiable woman need not bluſh to countenance with her preſence, this ſchool of moral emendation: To be noticed by their ſuperiors in rank, animates the exertions of theſe women, and lightens the taſk of reformation; and there is ſomething in the ſight of living purity (ſuch as it does often live in gentle, and gracious women), that makes the heart wiſer, and better in an inſtant, than the moſt ſpirited harangues on the nature, and glowing deſcriptions of the excellence of virtue.

My fellow Chriſtians, and my brothers, hear now my laſt words before you quit this ſolemn place, and return to the buſineſs, and buſtle of the world: Half a century will ſcarce elapſe, and every being here preſent will be dead; new men, and new events will occupy the world, and the dreaded pit of oblivion will ſhut over us all. Is the thought of an hereafter dear to you? Is it your care to meet the great God with good deeds? Have pity then on theſe forlorn women; for if you have no pity on them, they will ſpeedily be forſaken

by all: lay up a ſweet remembrance for the evil day; and know, that the beſt mediation with God Almighty, the Father, and his Son of mercy, and love, is the prayer of a human being whom you have ſaved from perdition.

ON THE PREDISPOSING CAUSES TO THE RECEPTION OF REPUBLICAN OPINIONS.

PSALM vii. v. 14.

Behold he travaileth with miſchief.

CANDID diſcuſſion is, perhaps, infinitely more rare, than thoſe who decide by the mere appearance of things are inclined to believe. Except on queſtions of pure ſcience, it is hardly poſſible to ſuppoſe the mind poiſed in a juſt equilibrium, and feeling, in the lively balance of reaſon, the weight of claſhing

arguments, and of contending ſyſtems. Early aſſociations, preſent feelings, and future hopes, adulterate the beſt productions of human reaſon; and every pride, and every paſſion, can ſhroud itſelf in the garb of truth, and baffle the vigilance, and mock at the wiſdom of man.

It is, then, a matter of ſovereign neceſſity, before we decide on great, and momentous queſtions, which affect our own happineſs, and the peace of the world, to make a wiſe, and virtuous pauſe,

and review, with an honeſt ſeverity, thoſe peculiarities of diſpoſition, ſituation, and education, which may communicate an unfair bias to the mind, and induce us to decide, not as the truth of things is, but as we are ourſelves.

Upon theſe principles, I propoſe to examine the prediſpoſing cauſes to republican opinions, and to endeavour to ſhow, that ſuch fatal notions proceed as frequently from motives of paſſion, and pride, as from cautious thought, and wide inquiry.

It has been often ſaid, that the pulpit ought not to be the vehicle of politics. If by politics is meant the ſubordinate queſtions of politics, domeſtic, and foreign arrangements, and that ſcience of the ſtreets which every ſilly man pretends to know by intuition, unqueſtionably with theſe follies, the pulpit is wholly unconcerned: But when the preference between forms of government ſwells into a great moral, and religious queſtion; when the horrible criſis of the times is ſuch, that a few more years may arm every needy murderer, and every meta-

phyſical fanatic, with weapons, and with theories, and the dreadful work of ſlaughter, and legiſlation may begin; is this no theme for the pulpit? Are individual, and minute queſtions in morals to be diſcuſſed in this place, and the great, and parent queſtion, whether morality and religion ſhall exiſt in any ſhape, and under any modification, to be paſſed over? Shall we ſtop to cry out on leſſer evils, when every holy barrier is burſt, when all the chains of paſſion are ſnapt in ſunder, when every foul vice has broken from the tombs of hell, and ſtalks

over the earth in the broad face of noon?

It will be urged, perhaps, that I am attacking an imaginary, rather than a real evil; that the advocates for republicaniſm are ſo extremely few, and ſo perfectly inconſiderable, that they are hardly deſerving of notice; and that Engliſhmen, taught by the dreadful example of France, have abandoned their crude admiration of revolutions, and rallied round their government, their laws, and their king.

There is ſomething ſo pleaſing in this ſuppoſition, that I moſt cordially wiſh it were in my power to accede to it; but alas! ſilence is not conviction: there are, I dread, many men on whom the decided temper of the times has forced a face of acquieſcence, who are only waiting for a moment of public misfortune to recoil upon their country, and glut a paſſion for change, and for deſtruction, which has become doubly terrible from the cravings of reſentment, and the fury of reſtraint. There are diſeaſes which never ſtrive with the

firm fleſh, and healthy blood, but wait for the emaciation, and adverſity of the body, that they may ruſh in, and embitter the bitterneſs, and quicken the ſwiftneſs of death.

At the ſame time, I am well aware, there are many men of admirable talents, and approved integrity, who have unjuſtly incurred the charge of republicaniſm; who have underſtandings too comprehenſive not to ridicule the follies, and hearts too good not to ſhudder at the enormities of ſuch a ſyſtem. But the real fact is, the

maſs of mankind have been ſo thoroughly alarmed by the progreſs of this evil, and the total ſubverſion of all human happineſs has been ſo imminently threatened, and ſo nearly accompliſhed, that the feelings of the public on this ſubject ought not only to be excuſed, but reſpected. It is hardly ſufficient now, that men ſhould not be actuated by this motive; but they ſhould not, by an inattention to forms, and decencies, expoſe themſelves to the imputation. Every worthy member of the community ought to ſacrifice the pride

of underſtanding, the contempt of minutiæ, and the impatience of reſtraint, to the conſideration of the arduous, and ſacred conteſt in which we are engaged.

Much is ſaid about liberality; and it is truly to be wiſhed, that the activity which ſuppreſſes a great evil, were more compatible with that cool diſcrimination which accurately marks its confines. But candour is the offspring of peace, and ſecurity, and is nearly allied to indifference; mankind muſt be rouſed to guard againſt ſuch an

evil; and when the powerful agents of hope and fear are in full motion, the tranquil virtues are ſoon put to flight. But the ſame overheated imagination which magnifies a danger, guards againſt it more effectually; the jealouſy which detects treaſon where it never exiſted, defeats it where it really is in force; and this ſuſpicion, ſo much complained of, though it be the cauſe of particular inquietude, is the great ſource of public ſalvation. It is eaſy to join in a romantic wiſh for the greater diffuſion of philoſophy; but, conſtituted as men are,

we muſt take the good with the appendant bad; and if we owe our protection to the virtue, we muſt not quarrel with the fault.

There lies at the bottom of all vaſt communities, a numerous ſect of men, of open, or diſguiſed poverty, who have loſt, in the ſink of pleaſure, fortune, and fame, and quenched every particle of God in voluptuous enormities, and crimes; baſe, bad men, who prey upon induſtry, and hate virtue; who would tear down the decencies, and pollute the innocence of life, that they

might make mankind as wretched as themſelves, and ſpread the horror of ungoverned paſſions, and unqualified indulgence. Here is the firſt nucleus of all revolutions: it matters not whether the object be to enſlave the people, or to free them; to give them up to another's tyranny, or to the more cruel dominion of their own folly; to eſtabliſh a deſpotiſm, or a democracy. In all revolutions there is plunder, and change; and here are the hordes of aſſaſſins, and robbers, the tools of political violence, tutored by their ancient pleaſures,

and their preſent diſtreſs, to callous inhumanity, and boundleſs rapine. This ſource of republicaniſm needs but very little comment; the cure of ſuch an evil falls under that general law of ſelf-defence, by which we cruſh a venomous reptile, or ſlaughter a beaſt of prey. No other argument can here be of the ſmalleſt importance, but the argument of brute force, and determined oppoſition.

The misfortune is, the evil has crept in amongſt men of education, of ſound moral character, and

unimpeached in the various relations of life; men of perſonal bravery, and plauſible talents, who command a conſiderable ſhare of individual reſpect, and impreſs more by what they are, than by what they ſay; and who add all the force of character to the bitterneſs of eternal invective, and unqualified aſſertion.

Upon the ſubject of republicaniſm itſelf, I do not mean to offer any thing. This topic has been ſo thoroughly ſifted, that it would be uſeleſs, and tireſome, to attempt

to throw any new light upon it. I concern myſelf only with thoſe cauſes which prediſpoſe the mind to the reception of ſuch extravagant opinions.

Amongſt theſe, one of the moſt common is vanity: A young man in ſome of the higher profeſſions, becomes fluent in technical phraſes, and ſkilful in technical buſineſs; he acquires ſome degree of conſideration in the little technical circle in which he lives, and taſtes, for the firſt time, the ſweets of diſtinction, and praiſe: inſtantly he

becomes to himſelf a creature of unlimited importance, a concealed treaſure; and careleſs of that partial pre-eminence, which he conſiders ſo much leſs than his real right, he paints to himſelf liſtening ſenates, and applauding people; and is an orator, a demagogue, and a ſtateſman.

It may ſeem trifling to attribute ſo great a crime to ſo light a vanity; but if we were to trace the origin of republican opinions in many individuals, before they were fixed by habit, and oppoſition, I

believe we ſhould not unfrequently find, they have proceeded from a talent for fluent ſpeaking. Men lean to that political ſyſtem which they think moſt favourable to their peculiar powers; and no two ideas are more inſeparably united than democracy, and eloquence. In the firſt half of life, vanity in all its various ſhapes is unqueſtionably the great moving paſſion; and it is, perhaps, in the firſt half of life that theſe ideas more peculiarly prevail. As a man multiplies his relations, and takes a firmer root in ſociety, as he aſſumes the new

characters of father, and huſband, and as the real buſineſs of the world crowds upon him, he becomes more practical; the follies, like the beauties of his youth, fade away, and the ſoul's dark manſion lets in new light through the openings which time has made.

It would ſeem alſo, that the ſcience of government is an unappropriated region in the univerſe of knowledge. Thoſe ſciences with which the paſſions can never interfere, are conſidered to be attainable only by ſtudy, and by reflec-

tion; while there are not many young men who doubt of their ability to make a conſtitution, or to govern a kingdom. At the ſame time, there cannot, perhaps, be a more decided proof of a ſuperficial underſtanding, than the depreciation of thoſe difficulties which are inſeparable from the ſcience of government. To know well the local, and the natural man; to track the ſilent march of human affairs; to ſeize, with happy intuition, on thoſe great laws which regulate the proſperity of empires; to reconcile principles to c cumſtances, and be

no wiſer than the times will permit; to anticipate the effects of every ſpeculation upon the entangled relations, and aukward complexity of real life; and to follow out the magnificent theorems of the ſenate to the daily comforts of the cottage; is a taſk which they will fear moſt, who know it beſt; a taſk in which the great, and the good have failed, and which it is not only wiſe, but pious, and juſt in common men to avoid.

There is a malignity of diſpoſition, favourable to the reception of

republican opinions, a wearineſs of the general content, a diſguſt at the diffuſion of happineſs, and a deſire to forget internal vexation, by the ſight of a contagious, and epidemic miſery. In a different temperament, this prediſpoſing cauſe is a love of turbulence, an impatience of every thing tranquil, and a horror of ſtagnant ſerenity, and inſipid content.

Many people who are conſcious, and juſtly conſcious, of merit, are diſpoſed to the reception of republican opinions, from finding

themſelves neglected by their ſuperiors in rank and reputation. Every man is deſirous of riſing in life, and ambitious of connecting himſelf in the moſt eligible manner. The world unfortunately meaſure by one ſcale, and the individual by another; and diſappointment is always attributed to the injuſtice of thoſe who confer reputation, rather than the overrated pretenſions of him who ſeeks it. In this way, the natural diſcontent of inferiority ſlides into republicaniſm, that great modern epidemic, which ſtands ready for every un-

healthy appearance of the mind, and ſwallows up all inferior taint in its own ſovereign malignity, and deſpotic contagion.

It is natural to every man to wiſh for diſtinction; and the praiſe of thoſe, who can confer honour by their praiſe, is, in ſpite of all falſe philoſophy, ſweet to every human heart: But as eminence can but be the lot of a few, patience of obſcurity is a duty which we owe not more to our own happineſs, than to the quiet of the world at large. Give a looſe, if you are young, and

ambitious, to that ſpirit which throbs within you; meaſure yourſelf with your equals; and learn, from frequent competition, the place which nature has allotted to you; make of it no mean battle, but ſtrive hard; ſtrengthen thy ſoul to the ſearch of truth, and follow that ſpectre of excellence which beckons thee on beyond the walls of the world, to ſomething better than man has yet done: It may be, thou ſhalt burſt out into light, and glory, at the laſt: but if frequent failure convince you of that mediocrity of nature which is incompatible with

great actions, ſubmit wiſely, and cheerfully to your lot: Let no ſpirit of revenge tempt you to throw off your loyalty to mankind; and to prefer a vicious celebrity to obſcurity crowned with piety, and virtue. If you can throw new light upon moral truth, or by any exertions multiply the comforts, or confirm the happineſs of mankind, this fame guides you to the true ends of your nature: But, in the name of God, as you tremble at retributive juſtice, and in the name of mankind, if mankind be dear to you, ſeek not that eaſy, and ac-

curſed fame which is gathered in the work of revolutions, and deem it better to be for ever unknown, than to found a momentary name upon the baſis of anarchy, and irreligion.

There is a weariſome, and ſickly affectation of feeling, favourable to the reception of republican opinions. There are men, by whom the people are ſpoken of in terms of the warmeſt compaſſion, to whom government conveys no other notion than that of a vaſt conſpirac againſt human happineſs, and

whoſe minds the different orders of ſociety are conſidered to be in a ſtate of eſſential hoſtility againſt each other. A poor man is neceſſarily an oppreſſed man, and a rich man neceſſarily a tyrant; and the day of political ſalvation is looked for, when the valleys are to be exalted, and the hills laid low, the crooked rendered ſtraight, and the rough places plain.

Beſides all theſe cauſes which I have ſpecified, and many more which I might ſpecify, if the time allotted to a ſermon would permit,

there is one of much greater importance than all, I mean the univerſal tendency amongſt men of education to call every received opinion into queſtion. This is no longer a bias of talents, or diſpoſition, in particular individuals; but as I have before obſerved, it is a faſhion among men of letters, ſo that the antiquity of an opinion, is as fatal a ſource of objection now, as its novelty was formerly; and that any ſyſtem, moral, religious, or political, has been handed down to us with the accumulated praiſe of many generations, is quite a ſufficient reaſon

why it ſhould be received with prejudice, and contempt. Formerly, mankind built upon the truth that preceding ages had laid down, and there was progreſſion. Now, every man who ſtudies, prides himſelf upon believing nothing till he has proved it, and totally rejects the influence of authority; the conſequence is, that as the few years of life fit for vigorous thought are perpetually broken in upon by the neceſſary buſineſs of the world, and as moſt people are never fit for vigorous thought at all, the better half of reading men paſs their lives

in a ſtate of the moſt pernicious ſcepticiſm, upon all received opinions of politics, religion, morals, and every other important conſideration of life whatſoever.

It is, I am afraid, from great evils alone that great improvements are made; and in another half century, perhaps, when mankind have learned the practical miſeries of this ſyſtem of thinking, and ſeen atheiſm, and anarchy diffuſed among thoſe whom they never meant it to reach, then, and not till then, will

the world revert to more ſober habits of inveſtigation, and inquiry.

In the mean time, what evils are in preparation for us, what we are doomed to ſee, and to ſuffer, it is painful, and difficult to conceive. Upon the ſucceſs of the conteſt which we are now carrying on, depends, perhaps, the tremendous queſtion, whether Europe ſhall, or ſhall not be viſited by a long period of political ſtruggles; and liberal arts, domeſtic happineſs, and rational piety, be forgotten, and deſtroyed in the ſorrows, and the fury

of revolutions. Our feelings are juſt now a little blunted from the long continuation of the danger; but no man can ſeriouſly turn his eyes to the poſition of the world, without being ſenſible, that till this great gulph be paſſed over, every hope of honeſt ambition, every wiſh for repoſe, every feeling which warms the heart, may be but a new cauſe of miſery and deſpair.

From all theſe evils, may the ſolid underſtanding, and watchful courage of the country at large, *guided*, and bleſſed by the provi-

dence of God, protect, and defend us; and may he ſhelter, with his almighty power, a humane, a generous, and an ancient people, who may now, perhaps, be the firſt to check mankind in the *abuſe*, as they were the firſt to rouſe them to the *uſe* of their power, their reaſon, and their rights.

UPON THE BEST MODE OF CHARITY.

DEUTERONOMY, chap. xv. v. 11.

For the poor ſhall never ceaſe out of the land. Therefore, I command thee, ſaying, Thou ſhalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the land.

I DO not propoſe to myſelf ſo very comprehenſive a ſubject as that of a general exhortation to charity; but preſuppoſing a due diſpoſition in the minds of my audience to relieve the wants of their fellow-

creatures, I ſhall take the liberty of ſuggeſting a few remarks upon the proper direction, and juſt government of this amiable virtue.

It is of importance, not only that we ſhould do good, but that we ſhould do it in the beſt manner. A little judgment, and a little reflection added to the gift, doubles its value; we exalt philanthropy, by making it uſeful, and we dignify benevolence by founding it on reaſon.

Mankind can never be too ſtrong-

ly, or too frequently cautioned againſt ſelf-deception. If a ſtate of vice be a ſtate of miſery, a ſtate of vice of which we are ignorant is doubly ſo, from the increaſed probability of its duration. It is ſurpriſing how many men are cheated by ſlighty ſentiments of humanity into a belief that they are humane; how frequently charitable words are miſtaken for charitable deeds, and a beautiful picture of miſery for an effectual relief of it. There are many who have tears for the chaſte, and claſſical ſorrow of the ſtage, who have

never ſubmitted to go into the poor man's cottage to hear his tedious narrative, and to come cloſe at hand with poverty, and its diſmal, and diſguſting attendants. Pure moral miſery wrought up into an artful tale, is a luxurious banquet for the refined mind, which would turn away from the groſs unhappineſs of real life, where the low, and the ludicrous are mingled with the ſad, where our delicacy is offended, while our feelings are rouſed, and we are reminded, not only of the misfortunes, but of the infirmities *of man.*

A ſtate of delicate ſenſibility in the moral feelings is commendable or blame-worthy, according to the conſequences to which it leads. If ſtrong impreſſions of human miſery rouſe us to the relief of it, they are faithful monitors to virtue, and cannot be too effectually preſerved; but if feelings are mere feelings, and do not ſtimulate us to action, they can anſwer no other purpoſe than to diſplay oſtentatious ſoftneſs, or inflict uſeleſs ſuffering.

If men indulge in ſpeculations,

far above the level of real life, the danger is, that they become unfit for action. Who can bear the muddy pool, and the barren ſand of the deſert, after he has gazed on the beautiful prodigies of a fancy landſcape? And if we have drawn romantic notions of misfortune, and annexed to it, the ideas of venerable, ſimple, docile, and grateful, we ſhall ſoon get diſguſted with the practice of charity, and fly back to the reveries of ſpeculative benevolence, as an aſylum from the diſappointments we meet with

in the world, as it is really conſtituted.

The moſt important point in the adminiſtration of charity, is a proper choice of the object we relieve. To give promiſcuouſly is better, perhaps, than not to give at all: but ſuppoſe each perſon in a ſituation of life to relieve the wants of his fellow-creatures, were, inſtead of running the chance of encouraging impoſture, to diſcover ſome worthy family ſtruggling up againſt the world; ſome poor widow, left with her helpleſs chil-

dren; old people incapable of labour, or orphans deſtitute of protection, and advice; ſuppoſe they were gradually to attach themſelves to ſuch real objects of compaſſion, to learn their wants, to ſtimulate their induſtry, and to correct their vices; ſurely theſe two ſpecies of charity are not to be compared together in the utility, or in the extent of their effects; in the benevolence they evince, or in the merits they confer. If you wiſh to gratify the feelings, or avoid the reproaches of your heart, with as little trouble to yourſelf as poſſi-

ble, you may laviſh your bounty upon the firſt object you meet, without knowing if you are gratifying vice, or relieving want. This is a kind of middle courſe, which, though it fall far ſhort of the dignity of virtue, keeps up a ſort of comfortable deluſion, and reconciles us pretty well to ourſelves.

Whereas, he who is charitable, not from conſtitutional feelings, but from a wide, ſtrong, and imperative ſenſe of duty, will remember, that he owes to the poor, not only that which he gives, but he

owes to them the happy application, and judicious diſtribution of the gift; he owes to them a certain portion of his time, and intelligence; the exerciſe of that influence which education, wealth, and manners always have, and always ought to have, upon the lower orders of mankind. This is the ſteady, enlightened compaſſion of an ample mind, and a good heart; this is that vigilant, and wiſe benevolence, which makes happy cottages, and ſmiling villages, and fills the ſpirit of a juſt man with unſpeakable delight.

This patronage, or adoption of the indigent, places the poor under the critical inſpection of their ſuperiors; it blends thoſe who want controul, with thoſe who can exerciſe it; it gives to the rich a taſte for doing good; to the poor, a love, and veneration for rank, and power, diffuſes civilization, and has a wonderful effect in promoting good order, and general improvement.

Thoſe who have taken notice of the very ſtriking difference between ſuch villages in the country, where the poor are deſerted by their na-

tural guides, and leaders, and thoſe where they have ſome truly good model to look up to, will, I am ſure, need no other proof of the juſtice of theſe remarks.

The true reaſon why this ſpecies of charity is ſo rarely practiſed, is, that we are afraid of impoſing ſuch a ſevere taſk upon our indolence; though, in truth, all theſe kind of difficulties are extremely over-rated. When once we have made an acquaintance with a poor family, and got into a regular train of ſeeing them at intervals, the trouble

is hardly felt, and the time ſcarcely miſſed. Yet, after all, what is this madneſs of men? Let us omit all mention of pleaſure; but, ſhall we lay out a whole life in the acquiſition of knowledge, in the purſuit of competence, and wealth? Shall we pawn our ſouls to party, and to ambition, and grudge thoſe few moments which we give up to ſolid deeds of virtue, the only deeds we ſhall look back on with pleaſure, when old age, and death near at hand, ſhow us the world in another, and in a true light? Can we find leiſure for all

the intricacies of buſineſs, and ſcience, and no leiſure to reconcile the man to his own heart? And ſhall we go to our grave, knowing all wiſdom but the beſt? "*If*," ſays Job, in the midſt of his afflictions, "*if I have withheld the poor from* "*their deſire, or have cauſed the eyes* "*of the widow to fail, or have eat-*" *en my morſel alone, and the father-*" *leſs hath not eaten thereof: If I* "*have ſeen any periſh for want of* "*covering, or any poor without cloth-*" *ing; if his loins have not bleſſed* "*me, and if he were not warmed* "*with the fleece of my ſheep: If I*

" *have lifted up my arm againſt the*
" *fatherleſs, when I ſaw my help in*
" *the gate; then let mine arm be*
" *broken from the bone, and let it*
" *fall from my ſhoulder-blade.*"

In talking of the various modes of charity, and the beſt manner of carrying our benevolent plans into execution, I wiſh to lay a particular ſtreſs upon viſiting the poor in perſon. He who only knows the miſeries of mankind at ſecond hand, and by deſcription, has but a faint idea of what is really ſuffered in the world. As much is done both

here and in England by the laws and magiſtrates for the relief of the poor, as laws, and magiſtrates can well do; but theſe exertions can never remedy the evils to which they are directed, if they are not ſeconded by the charitable labours of individuals. Do not therefore ſtifle the firſt emotions of pity, and ſpare yourſelves, from a belief that the poor are well enough taken care of by the civil power, and that individual interference is ſuperfluous. Many a hand is held up, and no man ſeeth it; many a groan is wafted in the air; many

die in ſecret, and, like the moments of the day, they periſh, and are forgotten.

Forgive me if I digreſs, to relate to you a little at length, a moſt dreadful ſcene of diſtreſs, to which I myſelf was a witneſs ſome years ago in the metropolis.

It was in a ſevere winter, when it pleaſed Almighty God, to viſit us with the twofold evils of ſcarcity, and cold, I happened, by the pureſt accident in the world, to viſit a family, which was in the laſt

ſtage of human wretchedneſs; they conſiſted of a man, his wife, and three children. I found the man in the laſt ſtate of a conſumptive complaint, and apparently little diſtant from his grave. The three children were not unintereſting, but they were neglected, and ſickly; and I learned from the moſt ſolemn aſſurance of the father, that they had not eaten one morſel of bread for that whole day. The mother was a ſpectacle which would have moved the moſt unfeeling man on earth; ſhe was in a ſtate of complete phrenſy; and it ap-

peared that bad ſupport, her inceſſant care of her huſband, and the horror of her childrens wanting bread, had turned this poor creature's brain, and driven her to the threſhold of death: the man, a plain, and honeſt man, was too far ſunk in body, and ſpirit, to give way to active grief; he talked of the hard labour he had gone through to ſupport his family, and ſighed for the ſtrength of better days, which had crowned his board with plenty, and peace. All this you can conceive, and you can figure to yourſelves the moving

ſight of little children diſtreſſed for food, and their looks of ſorrow, which always go to the ſoul, and ſpeak a clearer language than the tongues of men. All this you can paint to yourſelves; but you cannot paint to yourſelves the ſharp cries of the woman, and her looks of unſpeakable anguiſh, and all that ſhe raved for her children: your ears do not ring with her voice; you cannot ſee her moaning, and weeping, while her ſpirit was burſting with cruel affliction, and no comfort could reach her. Oh God! your ſoul would have leapt

from its body to have looked on this poor wretch. You would have given a thouſand lives to have ſaved her. On your bended knees you would have wearied Heaven for her ſalvation.—Go then, while good days are yet left to you,—go into the houſe of mourning, and, under the roof of affliction, mingle with the old, the wretched, and the ſad; bow down thy ſpirit with them, and chaſten thy ſoul with their ſorrow; when thy feet ſound on the threſhold of her door, the widowed woman ſhall ſay, there is bread for us to-day; and her

children ſhall flock about thee, and thou ſhalt be to them as a god; and ancient people ſhall have joy in their laſt days becauſe of thee; and thy mind ſhall be moved within thee; and the bread, and eſtate of the poor, and oppreſſed, ſhall be precious in thine eyes.

A want of charity is not always to be attributed to a want of compaſſion: The ſeeds of this virtue are too deeply fixed in the human conſtitution, to be eaſily eradicated: but the appeal to this claſs of feelings is not *ſufficiently* ſtrong; men

do not put themſelves into ſituations where they are liable to be called forth; they judge of the misfortunes of the poor through the medium of the underſtanding, not from the lively, and ardent pictures of ſenſation. We feel, it may be ſaid, the eloquence of deſcription; but what is all the eloquence of art, to that mighty, and original eloquence with which nature pleads her cauſe; to the eloquence of paleneſs, and of hunger; to the eloquence of ſickneſs, and of wounds; to the eloquence of extreme old age, of helpleſs infancy,

of friendleſs want! What perſuaſive like the melancholy appearance of nature badly ſupported, and that fixed look of ſadneſs, which a long ſtruggle with misfortune rivets on the human countenance! What pleadings ſo powerful as the rags and wretched hovels of the poor, and the whole ſyſtem of their comfortleſs economy!—Theſe are the moments in which the world, and its follies are forgotten, which throw the mind into a new attitude of ſolemn thought, which have reſcued many a human being from diſſipation and crime,

which have given birth to many admirable characters, and multiplied more than all moral exhortation, the friends of man, and the children of God.

In truth, if theſe obſervations be any where applicable or neceſſary, it is in great cities that they are peculiarly ſo; for as miſery increaſes with vice, and diſſipation extinguiſhes charity, the poor ſuffer more, and meet with leſs relief, at leaſt with leſs of that kind of relief which proceeds from the exertions, and interference of indi-

viduals. Far be it from me, in talking of the diſſipation of great cities, to wage war with the innocent pleaſures of life; with youth there ſhould be joy, for the beſt days of life are ſoon fled; but the danger is, that amidſt the conſtant enjoyments, and diverſions of ſociety, the heart ſhould become callous, and loſe that noble irritability, that moral life, which is the parent of all that is good in the world. Enchanting as the pleaſures of ſociety appear, they would ſtill derive an additional charm from the conſciouſneſs that you deſerved to en-

joy them, that you had acquired a right to be happy, from having made others ſo; and that an evening of innocent gaiety, was earned by a morning of virtuous exertions.

You are not, I hope, of opinion, that theſe kind of cares devolve upon the clergy alone, as the neceſſary labours of their profeſſion. Thoſe who teach Chriſtianity ought certainly to be moſt forward in every Chriſtian exertion; but unqueſtionably it is not from them alone that theſe exertions are ex-

pected, but from every one whoſe faith teaches, and whoſe fortune enables, him to be humane. I have touched on this point, becauſe ſuch an opinion, though too abſurd to be openly avowed, is not too abſurd for that crude, and haſty palliation, with which we ſmother the conſcience that we cannot ſatisfy.

I have only to beg your attention to this one remark, with which I ſhall conclude. Let us always remember that every charity is ſhort lived, and inefficacious, which flows from any other motive than

the right. There is a charity which is meant to excite the feelings of gratitude; but this will meet with its termination in its diſappointment. There is a charity which flows from the romantic fiction of humble virtue, and innocence in diſtreſs; but this will be ſoon diſguſted by low artifice, and ſcared by brutal vice. The charity which proceeds from oſtentation can exiſt no longer than when its motives remain undetected. That charity alone endures, which flows from a ſenſe of duty, and a hope in God. This is the charity

that treads in ſecret thoſe paths of miſery, from which all but the loweſt of human wretches have fled. This is that charity which no labour can weary, no ingratitude detach, no horrors diſguſt, that toils, that pardons, that ſuffers, that is ſeen by no man, and honoured by no man, but, like the great laws of nature, does the work of God in ſilence, and looks to future, and to better worlds for its reward.

ON THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

ACTS, chap. ix. v. 20. 21.

And ſtraightway he preached Chriſt in the ſynagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and ſaid, Is not this he that deſtroyed them which called on this name in Jeruſalem?

OF all the arguments dwelt on for the defence of Chriſtianity, none have been more forcibly, or ſucceſsfully urged than the converſion of St. Paul; and it certainly is a circumſtance which cannot

well be explained without the ſuppoſition of ſomething improbable, or the belief of ſomething miraculous.

To that bigotted ſcepticiſm which profeſſes to correct the errors of Chriſtianity without reaſoning itſelf, it can be of little uſe to addreſs any argument. Every plea is uſeleſs where the queſtion is prejudged. Reaſon has no gripe upon philoſophical, any more than on religious fanaticiſm. The man who ſets out with a predetermination to find Chriſtianity fabulous, and

invented, will reſiſt, not only the converſion of St. Paul, but would reſiſt, perhaps, the very miracle itſelf which produced his converſion.

The language which an advocate for Chriſtianity ought to hold with a ſceptic, appears to be this: "I am endeavouring to prove to "you, that thoſe hopes of immor- "tality which ſo many great men "have ſeen afar off, in the doubt- "ful light of human reaſon, have "been made certain by the reli- "gion of Chriſt. I am endeavour- "ing to ſhow you, that a ſyſtem

" of practical benevolence, better
" than the world has ever yet
" known, has ſprung from this
" high ſource; that you yourſelf
" are to be eternally happy here-
" after, if you will increaſe the
" happineſs of your fellow-crea-
" tures here; and that the price
" of immortality is benevolence.
" With theſe intentions, and theſe
" doctrines, I have a right to your
" ſerious attention. I have a right
" to that manly candour, which
" cruſhes at once every little gra-
" tification of vanity, or prejudice,
" incompatible with truth; that

" deems it more ſhameful to per-
" ſevere in an error than to ac-
" knowledge it; and follows with
" proud obedience (wherever they
" may lead), the guiding footſteps
" of reaſon."

Whoever examines the converſion of St. Paul in the frame and temper of mind here required, will meet, perhaps, with ſomething that will ſtagger his infidelity, moderate his contempt for Chriſtianity, and induce him to review, and recall his decided conviction of its ſpurious origin.

The treatment which Chriſt, his diſciples, and converts, experienced from the Jews, would, if other proofs were wanting, ſufficiently convince us of the tenacious adheſion of that people to the religion of their anceſtors, and how ſoon their watchful jealouſy on this ſubject would break out into cruel perſecution. The Romans, and the Athenians were, upon the whole, not only tolerant, but careleſs in matters of religion: Poets vilified their gods in the immoral actions, which they aſcribed to them; philoſophers denied their exiſtence; co-

medians ridiculed them upon the ſtage; the prieſts continued to ſacrifice; and the government was content. But the religion of the Jews was deeply fixed, and eagerly defended. God had ſingled out the Jews from the whole earth, as the people of his providence, and protection, had poured forth on the children of Iſrael a flood of light, which ſeparated them entirely from the darkened hemiſphere of the Pagans. They were proudly mindful of this diſtinction; ſtudied their whole law, with active inveſtigation, and defended it with ardent

zeal. Proſelytiſm, therefore, effected amongſt a people of this deſcription, is certainly more important as to the proof it affords, than any ordinary converſion from one religion to another. The ſtronger the reſiſtance, the greater force muſt overcome it. Prejudices ſo deeply imbibed, no common power can eradicate.

In the xxii. chap. Acts of the Apoſtles, Paul, in declaring his converſion, thus deſcribes himſelf: "I am verily a man which am a "Jew, born in Tarſus, and was

" brought up at the feet of Gama-
" liel, and taught according to the
" perfect manner of the law of the
" fathers, and was zealous towards
" God, as ye all are this day."

Paul, therefore, appears to have been a man thoroughly converſant with the Jewiſh law. The opinions of his nation were confirmed by the tenor of his education; and belief in him was not merely a popular opinion, caught from living with a multitude who were of the ſame creed, but an extended ſyſtem, diſciplined by regular learning, and

defended with ſcholaſtic acuteneſs. The pride of the ſcholar was added to the bigotry of the Jew, and he would reſiſt conviction, from intellectual vanity, as well as from religious faith; and the former motive, perhaps, would not have been the leaſt weak of the two.

If Paul had remained quiet at the firſt propagation of Chriſtianity; if he had taken no active part at this intereſting epoch; if he had viewed its progreſs with indifference; if he had ſuſpended his conviction till the ſenſation of no-

velty, too active for reaſon, had ſubſided, and left him to the free exerciſe of his underſtanding, we could not have been ſo much ſurpriſed that the reſult ſhould terminate in his converſion; but from the firſt appearance of Chriſtianity, he was its decided foe; at the firſt dawn of this new light, he roſe up in bitterneſs, and anger, to extinguiſh it, and bore witneſs to Judea that it was from men, and not from God.

In the above mentioned chapter, Paul ſays, " I perſecuted this way

" unto the death, binding and de-
" livering into priſons both men,
" and women. As alſo the high
" prieſt doth bear me witneſs, and
" the eſtate of the elders; from
" whom I received letters unto the
" brethren, and went to Damaſcus,
" to bring them which were bound
" into Jeruſalem, for to be puniſh-
" ed."

And yet this is he whom bondage could not make leſs zealous, who, under all modes of misfortune, and in every ſpecies of ſorrow, remained in ſtedfaſt faith, and immove-

able conviction; who, with that high principled courage which always keeps fortune beneath its feet, and riſes ſuperior to every event, boldly preached from the midſt of guards, and ſwords, and chains, the truths of the goſpel; truths, which ſhook the heart of Felix with fear, and drove Agrippa to the brink of converſion. And is there nothing in this ſpeaking fact, which comes home to the boſom of men? Nothing which can repreſs the confidence of infidelity, or break the ſlumber of indifference? Can we ſee enmity turned to protection;

the bitterneſs of perſecution exchanged for the zeal of friendſhip; the whole tenor of character, and every inveterate feeling, undergo ſuch radical converſion; without wondering how theſe things might be, without pondering on this curious evidence, and working up our faculties, to the eager examination of the moſt awful queſtion that can engage the wit of man?

After this general ſketch of his life, which I have already quoted, Paul proceeds to ſtate the particular circumſtances of his converſion.

" Whereupon, as I went to Da-
" maſcus, with authority and com-
" miſſion from the chief prieſts,
" at mid-day, Oh King, I ſaw in
" the way a light from heaven, a-
" bove the brightneſs of the ſun,
" ſhining round about me, and
" them which were with me. And
" when we were all fallen to the
" earth, I heard a voice from hea-
" ven." And he then proceeds to relate the command he received from God, which is too well known to need quotation.

It would be impoſſible to attempt

a full, and ſatisfactory anſwer, to thoſe who, in this place, would go to the general queſtion, and object to all miracles at once, becauſe ſuch a very important ſubject merits an original inquiry, rather than a caſual digreſſion. But that queſtion which has been often put, and never fairly anſwered, may be again repeated. Admit, that God governs the world by general laws, Where is the abſurdity of ſuppoſing a particular exception to theſe laws, to anſwer a particular purpoſe of providence; of believing that he ſhould enlighten the world by the miſſion

of Chriſt; or prove the authenticity of that divine miſſion by the converſion of St. Paul? Thoſe who ſee marks of intelligence, and deſign in the creation of the world, muſt believe that there was a time when this intelligence, and deſign firſt began to operate; when it willed to give to matter modifications of exiſtence, which till that time it had ever been without. And it is ſurely difficult to ſay, why God, after this firſt act of creative benevolence, ſhould never reviſit this wonder that he had left floating in the heavens, or why he ſhould give up

its nobleſt tenant for ever to his weak reaſon, and his wild paſſions. Upon theſe principles, the idea of a miracle, far from implying any abſurdity, ſeems to exalt our notions of the Deity, and changes a caſual, and capricious bounty, into a permanent, and imperiſhable benevolence.

But, to return from this digreſſion to the particular queſtion before us—It muſt follow, as an inevitable conſequence, if this miracle be not true, that St. Paul deceived himſelf, or that he deceived other

people; that he was either a dupe, or an impoſtor.

We will *firſt* inquire, if it be probable that St. Paul endeavoured to impoſe on the world a miracle, in which he himſelf had not a thorough belief; and the obvious mode of beginning ſuch an inveſtigation, will be to examine into the motives which, under any rules by which the human character ought to be judged, could have influenced St. Paul to the commiſſion of ſuch a deſpicable fraud,

and implicated him in ſuch a ſhameleſs piece of hypocriſy.

I believe it may be laid down as a general rule, that every man will love that which is honourable, and virtuous, where he can gain nothing by perfidy, and vice. No man is gratuitouſly bad; no man covers himſelf with crimes from a mere luſt for diſgrace, or an eager reliſh for infamy. Self-approbation is not bartered for nothing; every human being naturally loves the praiſe of his own heart, and the approbation of his fellow-crea-

tures; and if he ſells them, he ſells them for ſome pleaſure that is poignant, ſome gratification that is exquiſite, ſomething that will pay him for remorſe.

Now, what poſſible motive could St. Paul have had, to ſacrifice the conſideration in which he was held by his countrymen, to expoſe himſelf to ridicule, and contempt, to perſecution, and poverty, to the moſt extreme, and the moſt varied diſtreſs? Could the Chriſtians hold out to him any magnificent temptations? Could they buy him by

the gorgeous allurements of honour, power, and opulence? Alas! what could the Chriſtians give? Begging themſelves for life, for bread, and compaſſion, flying to rocks, and caverns, not to conceal crimes, but to pray to the God of heaven, and earth, in truth, and ſpirit, What gilded hopes, and ſplendid promiſes could they hold out to mercenary talents, and venal ambition? The perſecuted cannot protect; power is not in the gift of poverty; the indigent and afflicted have nothing to offer but a ſhare in their miſery. They could ſay to St. Paul, "Be a

" Chriſtian as we are; we have not,
" indeed, much of worldly honour to
" beſtow; but you may ſhare our
" perſecution; you may become its
" moſt important ſubject, you may
" be the *protomartyr* of our ſect; you
" may be a more illuſtrious outcaſt,
" a more exalted victim, a more
" ſplendid exile, than has yet graced
" the annals of our miſery; you may
" live in ſorrow, and die in torture."
This muſt have been the language of Chriſtian ſeduction, and theſe the irreſiſtible temptations which worked upon St. Paul to proſtitute his honour, and deſert his religion;

he muſt have ſubmitted to be baſe, in order to be miſerable; he muſt have waded through impoſture to martyrdom, and thought no artifice too mean to encounter difficulty, and court perſecution.

If St. Paul did not believe his own teſtimony, but was impoſing on mankind, What evidence can we ever hear with confidence, and conviction? With him ſeems to riſe or fall the credibility of all human aſſertions. Mere words we may, perhaps, miſtruſt: the ſad knowledge of man's depravity may

juſtify us even in doubting of oaths, and balancing the probability againſt the ſolemnity of the aſſertion: but he who ſtrengthens his teſtimony by his misfortunes, cannot be any longer ſuſpected. He who is beaten, ſhipwrecked, and chained, cannot be conſidered as the martyr of obſtinate fraud; he has waſhed off every ſtain of ſuſpicion by his blood, and has ſhown, in the noble catalogue of his woes, the heroic patience of conviction, and the unſhaken courage of truth.

Independent of theſe general

principles, there are many minute arguments which occur in reading the relation, to ſanction the teſtimony of St. Paul. He ſays, when this circumſtance happened, there was a company of men with him, and that he was blind for three days after. Theſe circumſtances laid open to the Jews a field for inquiry, and detection, which no adroit impoſtor, or indeed no impoſtor of common underſtanding, would expoſe himſelf to. A feigned miracle may as well happen in ſolitude, as not; nor is there any reaſon why it ſhould be

attended with perſonal inconvenience to him who witneſſes it. Then again, if any conſiderations of policy had influenced his conduct, he would have ſoftened the odium of apoſtacy, by the gradual derelict ion of former connections: But obſerve the ſingular circumſtances of his converſion: he ſets out for Damaſcus, an infidel, bloated with rage, and yearning for blood; his errand of death was a legal one; he bore with him the credentials of cruelty, which he had eagerly ſought for, and eaſily obtained; he went forth the accredited miniſter of

Jewiſh revenge, their favourite aſ-ſaſſin; he went forth, and the people ſhouted, and clapped their bloody hands. How did he arrive? With a heart ſoftened by ſorrow, and burſting with remorſe; lowly, bro-ken, and penitent; not the mini-ſter, but the object of revenge; preaching Chriſt, and lamenting with tears and ſighs, the infatuation of his paſt days. This is the por-tentous fact which vouches ſo ſtrongly for Chriſtianity; here it is, if any where, that the finger of God is to be ſeen in our reli-gion.

Let us now conſider, if there be any reaſons to believe that St. Paul was himſelf deceived, and that this miracle, inſtead of a real revelation, was nothing more than the phantaſm of a deluded imagination.

If the character of St. Paul were ſuch as to juſtify us in this ſuppoſition, and induce us to believe, that a mind too intenſely employed, and too fervently heated, had loſt all wholeſome controul over the fancy; the difficulty is, to conceive why this ſelf-created viſion, did not rather model itſelf in conformity with,

than in oppoſition to the whole former tenor of his words, and actions. If his miracle had ſpurred him on to new aſperities, and freſh bitterneſs againſt the Chriſtians, it would have accorded very well, with the uſual hiſtory of fanaticiſm, and the extravagancies of his fancy would have preſerved a certain affinity to his ordinary ideas. Madneſs does not reverſe the notions which a mind in health intenſely dwells upon, but points them, and gives them new vigour; it does not ſtruggle againſt the tide of the conceptions, but hurries that tide on with freſh

impetuoſity. St. Paul, a viſionary, and a madman, would have hated the Chriſtians worſe, than in his ſober mind: If not, I will venture to aſſert, that it is the only inſtance on record, where an enthuſiaſtic ſuppoſition of intercourſe with Heaven has cured fanaticiſm, inſtead of increaſing it; and to ſuppoſe it, is to decide contrary to human experience, for the ſole purpoſe of depreciating Chriſtianity.

Is there, moreover, any thing in the character of St. Paul, when he became a Chriſtian, that can war-

rant this imputation of fanatical derangement? Is a fanatic obſervant of times, and ſeaſons? Does he bend this way, and that way, in dexterous fluctuation with the little paſſions, and prejudices of men? The very ſtrong feature of fanaticiſm, is a want of fine perception, an ungovernable and monotonous violence, totally unobſervant of occaſions: But St. Paul at Athens makes no mention of the goſpel, or the new light, or Chriſt, or his diſciples, or Moſes, or the Jewiſh law; he addreſſes them in a ſtrain of general, and exalted eloquence;

quotes their own poets in confirmation of his opinions; tells them he was come to make known to them that God, whom they ignorantly worſhipped, and to ſhow them clearly theſe attributes which they already adored in dark piety, and revered with unenlightened wonder. See how dexterouſly he avails himſelf of the ſtate of parties in the Jewiſh ſynagogue! "Paul perceiv-
" ing, that part were Sadducees,
" and the other Phariſees, cried
" out, I am a Phariſee. And when
" he ſaid ſo, there aroſe a diſſen-
" tion between the Phariſees, and

" Sadducees, and the multitude " were divided." How eloquently and ably he puſhes on the wavering faith of Agrippa! How he animates that ſpark of Chriſtianity which begins to glow in his breaſt, and himſelf kindles into ſevenfold eloquence, when the hope of reclaiming this illuſtrious Pagan flaſhes acroſs his mind! " King A- " grippa, believeſt thou the pro- " phets? I know that thou believeſt. " And Agrippa ſaid, Thou almoſt " perſuadeſt me to be a Chriſtian. " Then ſaid Paul, I would to God, " that not only thou, but that all

" who hear me this day, were as I " am, ſaving theſe bonds."

Here then we will ſtop, and, recapitulating, in a few ſimple words, the ſtory we have told, make our ſtand for Chriſtianity. At the firſt appearance of this religion, St. Paul declares himſelf its enemy, and becomes the bitter perſecutor of its converts. He ſolicits, and obtains permiſſion from the high prieſt to root it out. He on a ſudden declares his belief in this hereſy, fairly tells the Jews that he

had been converted by a miracle; not only believes, but ardently propagates it; and, in the courſe of his religious labours, expoſes himſelf to every poſſible danger, and difficulty, that human nature can encounter.

The inferences we draw from this plain hiſtory, are theſe—That that man cannot be inſincere, who has ſuffered evils worſe than death for what he believes to be the truth; who, by a life of pain, and wandering, of anguiſh, and labour, has

borne witneſs to the integrity of his faith: that that man cannot be a weak man, who has carried the arts of ſucceſsful perſuaſion, through barbarous, and through civilized countries, and extorted from Pagan pride, and Pagan power, ſuch ſplendid evidence of his cogent arguments, and his impoſing eloquence. He is then a juſt man, and a wiſe man; and as he is, let not his long labours, and his illuſtrious life, be loſt upon us; let him not plead, and ſuffer in vain; let us finiſh (what Agrippa began) our convic-

tion; and when he reaſons of temperance, and righteouſneſs, and judgment to come, let us do more than Felix, not only tremble, but tremble, and repent.

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SERMONS,

BY THE

REVEREND SYDNEY SMITH, A. M.

LATE FELLOW OF NEW COLLEGE, OXFORD.

THE SECOND EDITION,

WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

He who publiſhes Sermons ſhould explain whether he publiſhes Speeches, or Eſſays, or what it is he does publiſh; for metaphyſical diſſertations, theological polemics, ſcripture criticiſm, hiſtorical diſquiſition, and moral, and religious doctrine, and exhortation, are all included under the appellation of Sermons. Now, every work ſhould be tried by the intentions with which it was written. A moral Sermon, delivered before a mixed

audience of both ſexes, would be very bad, if it contained a profound analyſis of human motives, and actions; and ſuch an analyſis ſhould never be attempted before a mixed audience, becauſe a continued attention to a difficult ſubject, is a very rare quality, which the habits of the maſs of mankind can never lead them to acquire. Before ſuch an audience all theſe ſermons were delivered, and whoever does me the honour of judging of them at all, will, I hope, do me the juſtice of judging them with a relation to this circumſtance.

The clergy have at all times complained of the decay of piety, in language ſimilar to that which they now hold from the pulpit. The beſt way of bringing this declamation to proof, is to look into the inſide of our churches, and to remark how they are attended. In London, I dare ſay, there are full ſeven-tenths of the whole population, who hardly ever enter a place of worſhip, from one end of the year to the other. At the faſhionable end of the town, the congregations are almoſt wholly made up of ladies, and there is an appearance of

liſtleſſneſs, indifference, and impatience, very little congenial to our theoretical ideas of a place of worſhip. In the country villages, half of the pariſhioners do not go to church at all, and almoſt all, with the exception of the ſick, and old, are in a ſtate of wretched ignorance, and indifference, with regard to all religious opinions whatever.

The clergy of a diſtrict in the dioceſe of Lincoln, aſſociated lately for the purpoſe of forming an eſtimate of the ſtate of religion within their own limits. The amount of the po-

pulation where the inquiry was ſet on foot, was 15,042. It was found, that the average number of the ordinary congregations, was 4,933; and of communicants at each ſacrament, 1,808; ſo that not one in three attended divine ſervice, nor one in ſix of the adults (who amounted to 11,282) partook of the ſacrament.

Though other grave, and important cauſes, have unqueſtionably contributed very largely to produce this indifference, which is by no means neceſſarily connected with

infidelity; ſtill, I am afraid, it muſt in ſome little degree be attributed to our form of worſhip, and to the clergy themſelves.

That the attention of the greater part of an audience can be kept up, through many repetitions, in a ſervice that laſts an hour and a half, or an hour and three quarters, is as much to be wiſhed, as it is to be little expected. Our liturgy ſhows how neceſſary it is to place the moſt admirable, and amiable principles, under the controul of judgment. Piety, ſtretched beyond a certain point, is the parent of im-

piety. By attempting to keep up the fervor of devotion for ſo long a time, we have thinned our churches, and driven away thoſe fluctuating, lukewarm Chriſtians who will always outnumber the zealous, and devout, and whom it ſhould be our firſt object to animate, allure, and fix. If there be more joy in Heaven over one ſinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine juſt perſons, we may well pay more attention upon earth to the ninety and nine ſinners, than to the one juſt perſon, of whom ſociety is compoſed.

The Engliſh clergy, though upon the whole a very learned, pious, moral, and decent body of men, are not very remarkable for profeſſional activity, and when they have diſcharged the formal, and exacted duties of religion, are not very forward, by gratuitous inſpection, and remonſtrance, to keep alive, and diffuſe a due ſenſe of religion in their pariſhioners.

To theſe cauſes may be added, the low ſtate of pulpit eloquence.

Preaching has become a bye-

word for long, and dull converſation of any kind; and whoever wiſhes to imply, in any piece of writing, the abſence of every thing agreeable, and inviting, calls it a Sermon.

One reaſon for this is, the bad choice of ſubjects for the pulpit. The clergy are allowed about twenty-ſix hours every year for the inſtruction of their fellow-creatures; and I cannot help thinking, this ſhort time had better be employed on practical ſubjects, in explaining, and enforcing that conduct which

the ſpirit of Chriſtianity requires, and which mere worldly happineſs commonly coincides to recommend. Theſe are the topics neareſt the heart, which make us more fit for this, and a better world, and do all the good that Sermons ever will do. Critical explanations of difficult paſſages of ſcripture, diſſertations on the doctrinal, and myſterious points of religion, learned inveſtigations of the meaning, and accompliſhment of prophecies, do well for publication, but are ungenial to the habits, and taſte of a general audience. Of the higheſt

importance they are to thoſe who can defend the faith, and ſtudy it profoundly; but, God forbid it ſhould be neceſſary to be a ſcholar, or a critic, in order to be a Chriſtian. To the multitude, whether elegant or vulgar, the reſult only of erudition, employed for the defence of Chriſtianity, can be of any conſequence: With the erudition itſelf they cannot meddle, and muſt be fatigued if they are doomed to hear it. In every congregation there are a certain number, whom principle, old age, or ſickneſs, has rendered truly devout: But in

preaching, as in every thing elſe, the greater number of inſtances conſtitute the rule, and the leſſer the exception.

A diſtinction is ſet up, with the uſual inattention to the meaning of words, between moral and religious ſubjects of diſcourſe; as if every moral ſubject muſt not neceſſarily be a Chriſtian ſubject. If Chriſtianity concern itſelf with our preſent, as well as our future happineſs, how can any virtue, or the doctrine which inculcates it, be conſidered as foreign to our ſacred

religion? Has our Saviour forbidden juſtice, proſcribed mercy, benevolence, and good faith? or, when we ſtate the more ſublime motives for their cultivation, which we derive from revelation, why are we not to diſplay the temporal motives alſo, and to give ſolidity to elevation, by fixing piety upon intereſt?

There is a bad taſte in the language of Sermons, evinced by a conſtant repetition of the ſame ſcriptural phraſes, which perhaps were uſed with great judgment

two hundred years ago, but are now become ſo trite, that they may, without any great detriment, be exchanged for others. *Putting off the old man—and putting on the new man—The one thing needful—The Lord hath ſet up his candleſtick—The armour of righteouſneſs, &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. &c.* The ſacred ſcriptures are ſurely abundant enough to afford us the ſame idea, with ſome novelty of language: We can never be driven from the penury of theſe writings, to wear, and fritter their holy language into a perfect cant, which paſſes through

the ear, without leaving any impreſſion, but that of ridicule, or diſguſt.

To this cauſe of the unpopularity of Sermons, may be added the extremely ungraceful manner in which they are delivered. The Engliſh, generally remarkable for doing very good things in a very bad manner, ſeem to have reſerved the maturity, and plenitude of their aukwardneſs for the pulpit: A clergyman clings to his velvet cuſhion with either hand, keeps his eye riveted upon his book, ſpeaks of the ecſtacies of joy, and fear, with

a voice, and a face which indicate neither, and pinions his body and ſoul into the ſame attitude of limb, and thought, for fear of being called theatrical, and affected. The moſt intrepid veteran of us all, dares no more than wipe his face with his cambric ſudarium: If, by miſchance, his hand ſlip from its orthodox gripe of the velvet, he draws it back as from liquid brimſtone, or the cauſtic iron of the law, and atones for this indecorum, by freſh inflexibility, and more rigorous ſameneſs. Is it wonder, then, that every ſemi-delirious ſec-

tary, who pours forth his animated nonſenſe, with the genuine look, and voice of paſſion, ſhould geſticulate away the congregation of the moſt profound, and learned divine of the eſtabliſhed church, and in two Sundays preach him bare to the very ſexton? Why are we natural every where but in the pulpit? No man expreſſes warm, and animated feelings any where elſe, with his mouth alone, but with his whole body; he articulates with every limb, and talks from head to foot with a thouſand voices. Why this holoplexia on ſacred occaſions a-

lone? Why call in the aid of paralyſis to piety? Is it a rule of oratory, to balance the ſtyle againſt the ſubject, and to handle the moſt ſublime truths, in the dulleſt language, and the drieſt manner? Is ſin to be taken from men, as Eve was from Adam, by caſting them into a deep ſlumber? Or from what poſſible perverſion of common ſenſe, are we all to look like field-preachers in Zembla, holy lumps of ice, numbed into quieſcence, and ſtagnation, and mumbling?

But it is theatrical to uſe action, and it is methodiſtical to uſe action.

True; but if heterodox preachers, and profane players, expreſs what they have to ſay in a manner more congenial to the feelings of mankind than we do ourſelves, we ſhould imitate them, with thoſe alterations, and modifications required by the difference of circumſtances: The aſſociation would ſoon be buried in the ſuperior excellence derived from the imitation; it would never exiſt very ſtrongly; for no paſſion is ever painted ſo warmly in the pulpit as on the ſtage, and therefore need not be expreſſed ſo violently, or in a manner ſo nearly approaching to what

we call *rant*. But if it could poſſibly happen, that a long, and grave exhortation, whether religious, or moral, could be introduced into a play, I have no doubt that Garrick would have delivered it, and Kemble would now deliver it, in a much more ſolemn, impreſſive manner, than the moſt celebrated clergyman in Great Britain. We have cheriſhed this contempt for ſectaries, and perſevered in this dignified tameneſs ſo long, that while we are freezing common ſenſe, for large ſalaries, in ſtately churches, amidſt whole acres, and furlongs, *of empty* pews, the crowd are feaſt-

ing on ungrammatical fervour, and illiterate animation, in the crumbling hovels of methodiſts. If influence over the imagination can produce theſe powerful effects; if this be the chain by which the people are dragged captive at the wheel of enthuſiaſm, why are we, who are rocked in the cradle of ancient genius, who hold in one hand the book of the wiſdom of God, and in the other graſp that eloquence which ruled the Pagan world, why are we never to rouſe, to appeal, to inflame, to break through every barrier, up to the very haunts, and chambers of the ſoul? If the vileſt

intereſt upon earth, can daily call forth all the powers of the mind, are we to harangue on public order, and public happineſs, to picture a reuniting world, a reſurrection of ſouls, a rekindling of ancient affections, the dying day of heaven, and of earth, and to unveil the throne of God, with a wretched apathy, which we neither feel, nor ſhow, in the moſt trifling concerns of life? This ſurely can be neither decency nor piety, but ignorant ſhame, boyiſh baſhfulneſs, luxurious indolence, or any thing but propriety, and ſenſe. There is, I grant, ſomething diſcouraging at preſent, to a man

of ſenſe, in the ſarcaſtical phraſe of popular preacher: But I am not entirely without hope, that the time may come, when energy in the pulpit will be no longer conſidered as a mark of ſuperficial underſtanding; when animation and affectation will be ſeparated; when churches will ceaſe (as Swift ſays) to be public dormitories; and ſleep be no longer looked upon as the moſt convenient vehicle of good ſenſe.

I know well, that out of ten thouſand orators, by far the greater number muſt be bad, or none could be good; but by becoming ſenſible

of the miſchief we have done, and are doing, we may all advance a proportional ſtep: The worſt may become what the beſt are, and the beſt better.

There is always a want of grandeur, in attributing great events to little cauſes: But this is in ſome ſmall degree compenſated for by truth. I am convinced we ſhould do no great injury to the cauſe of religion, if we remembered the old combination of *aræ et foci*, and kept our churches a little warmer. An experienced clergyman can pretty well eſtimate the

number of his audience, by the indications of a ſenſible thermometer. The ſame blighting wind chills piety, which is fatal to vegetable life; yet our power of encountering weather, varies with the object of our hardihood; we are very Scythians, when pleaſure is concerned, and Sibarites, when the bell ſummons us to church.

No reflecting man can ever wiſh to adulterate manly piety (the parent of all that is good in the world), with mummery and parade. But we are ſtrange, very ſtrange creatures; and it is better,

perhaps, not to place too much confidence in our reaſon alone. If any thing, there is, perhaps, too little of pomp, and ceremony, in our worſhip, inſtead of too much. We quarrelled with the Roman Catholic church, in a great hurry, and a great paſſion, and furious with ſpleen, clothed ourſelves with ſackcloth, becauſe ſhe was habited in brocade, ruſhing, like children, from one extreme to another, and blind to all medium between complication, and barrenneſs, formality, and neglect. I am very glad to find, we are calling in more and more the aid of muſic to our ſer-

vice. In London, where it can be commanded, good muſic has a prodigious effect in filling a church; organs have been put up in various churches in the country, and, as I have been informed, with the beſt poſſible effect. Of what value, it may be aſked, are auditors, who come there from ſuch motives? But our firſt buſineſs ſeems to be, to bring them there from any motive, which is not undignified, and ridiculous, and then to keep them there from a good one: Thoſe who come for pleaſure, may remain for prayer.

Pious and worthy clergymen are

ever apt to imagine, that mankind are what they ought to be; to miſtake the duty for the fact; to ſuppoſe that religion can never weary its votaries; that the ſame novelty and ornament which are neceſſary to enforce every temporal doctrine, are wholly ſuperfluous in religious admonition; and that the world at large, conſider religion as the moſt important of all concerns, merely becauſe it is ſo: Whereas, if we refer to facts, the very reverſe appears to be the caſe. Every conſideration influences the mind, in a compound ratio of the importance of the effects which it involves, and

their proximity. A man who was ſure to die a death of torture in ten years, would think more of the moſt trifling gratification, or calamity of the day, than of his torn fleſh, and twiſted nerves, years hence. If we were to read the gazette of a naval victory from the pulpit, we ſhould be dazzled with the eager eyes of our audience; they would ſit through an earthquake to hear us. The cry of a child, the fall of a book, the moſt trifling occurrence, is ſufficient to diſſipate religious thought, and to introduce a more willing train of ideas: A ſparrow fluttering about

the church, is an antagoniſt which the moſt profound theologian in Europe is wholly unable to overcome. A clergyman has ſo little previous diſpoſition to attention in his favour, that, without the utmoſt efforts, he can neither excite it, or preſerve it when excited. It is his buſineſs to awaken mankind by every means in his power, and to ſhow them their true intereſt. If he deſpiſe energy of manner, and labour of compoſition, from a conviction that his audience are willing, and that his ſubject alone will ſupport him, he will only add lethargy to languor, and confirm the drowſi-

neſs of his hearers, by becoming a great example of ſleep himſelf.

That many greater cauſes are at work to undermine religion, I ſeriouſly believe, but I ſhall probably be laughed at when I ſay, that warm churches, ſolemn muſic, animated preaching upon practical ſubjects, and a ſervice ſome little abridged, would be no contemptible ſeconds to the juſt, neceſſary, and innumerable invectives which have been levelled againſt Rouſſeau, Voltaire, D'Alembert, and the whole pandemonium of thoſe martyrs to atheiſm, who toiled with

ſuch laborious malice, and ſuffered odium with ſuch inflexible profligacy, for the wretchedneſs, and deſpair of their fellow-creatures.

I have merely expreſſed what appears to me to be the truth in theſe remarks. I hope I ſhall not give offence; I am ſure I do not mean to do it. Some allowance ſhould be made for the ſeverity of cenſure, when the provident ſatiriſt furniſhes the raw material for his own art, and commits every fault which he blames.

ON THE EFFECTS WHICH CHRISTIANITY OUGHT TO PRODUCE UPON MANNERS.

GALATIANS, chap. v. v. 25.

The fruits of the Spirit are, love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, &c.

IN this epiſtle to the Galatians, as in many parts of his writings. St. Paul diſtinguiſhes between the works of the fleſh, and of the ſpirit; meaning by the firſt, the gratification of thoſe bad appetites, and paſſions incidental to our nature; and by

the laſt, thoſe virtues which we are taught by the Chriſtian religion.

The catalogue of natural vices exhibits a true, and diſguſting picture of man untaught, and unpurified by his Creator. The works of the fleſh, ſays he, are hatred, variance, ſtrife, wrath, emulations, envyings, and ſeditions. But the Chriſtian religion teaches another mind, the apoſtle adds; the fruits of that ſpirit it would inculcate, are love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, and goodneſs. In this manner, the general ſcope of Chriſtiani-

ty is pointed out in a few words, and a teſt afforded us, by which we may eſtimate our progreſs in religious virtue.

We ſay, in our language, to ſeize on the ſpirit of a thing; we talk of the ſpirit of our political conſtitution, of the ſpirit of our civil, and criminal law; and we ſeem to mean by the expreſſions, thoſe few leading principles which uniformly pervade theſe reſpective codes, and give them conſiſtency of character; that oldeſt model, and that commanding ſcale, by which each ſuc-

ceeding artiſt has faſhioned the beauty, and meaſured the height of his added work. In this ſenſe, the apoſtle unfolds to us the ſpirit of Chriſtianity, the object, and tendency of all its laws; it is inſtituted, ſays he, to increaſe love, and affection amongſt each other; it is inſtituted to make us happy, to diffuſe peace, to inculcate mutual forbearance, gentleneſs, goodneſs, and meekneſs.

I ſhall therefore ſpeak to you today of the Chriſtian ſpirit, and of thoſe manners which evince, and

proceed from, it: At other times it may be convenient to dwell ſeparately on ſome of its particular laws; this day we will blend them together, and judge of their wiſdom, and harmony, from that moral being which they labour to create.

The fruits of the ſpirit are love. — By love, the apoſtle means philanthropy, the general love of our fellow-creatures, a paſſion dwelling more often on the lip, than in the heart, and rather a theme on which we declaim, than a motive from which we act. Every human being

has a certain range of affection, and has perhaps paſſed through the whole ſcale of preference, from the common impulſe of civility to the warm feelings of friendſhip. But private friendſhip is ſomething very different from Chriſtian love. Friendſhip is a commerce of good offices, in which, as in all other commerce, our object is gain not long deferred; it is in fact the creature of our wants, and fears, and infirmities; it is a ſpecies of prudence, rather than of virtue. One modern author *, indeed, whoſe humble ob-

* Godwin.

ject it ſeems to be to remodel the decalogue, by erafing the negative from each of its prohibitory laws, has thought fit to contend, that individual friendſhip is criminal. To ſtate this is enough to make it ridiculous, and, in general, any other attack upon this author, than a clear explanation of what he means, is ſuperfluous; to repeat his propoſitions, anſwers the double purpoſes of revenge, and refutation. But be this as it may, when we love our fellow-creatures as a Chriſtian ſhould love them, religious hope, and ſelf-approbation are our re-

ward, and a ſenſe of duty our motive to action. We ſeek our happineſs, where we can ſeldom fail to find it, in the comfort and tranquillity of all around us.

The maſs of us who are called Chriſtians do not hate our fellow-creatures, but we do not love them. Miſanthropy is a compound of ill temper, diſappointment, and folly, which does not often occur. But moſt men are indifferent to that part of the ſpecies, which is out of the pale of their own private acquaintance; the cry of public

wretchedneſs never reaches them; they never ſeek for hidden miſery; they ſhrink from that courageous love which wades through mockery, and contempt, and filth, and horror, to curb the infamous with laws, and comfort the poor with bread, and when the rain, and the tempeſt blacken the earth, they gather round their comforts within, and make faſt the bars of their gates againſt the crying Lazarus, and leave his ſores to the dogs, and his head to the ſtorm.

My brethren, the fruits of the

ſpirit are love.——If ever that love could find objects for all its tenderneſs, it is now in this ſeaſon of public diſtreſs: The enemies of our faith are unwearied in their attacks; they call our religion a religion of forms, and poſtures, and myſteries; now ſhow them what are the bearings of Chriſtianity upon real life, and practice; ſhow them, that its characteriſtics are not only purity, but wiſdom; that it is founded upon the great laws of human nature, and forms, as it ever will form, the firmeſt baſis of civil life; refute them with cogent reaſonings of cha-

rity, with bold arguments of mercy, with the conquering eloquence of compaſſion; ſhow them that the ſpirit doth bear fruit, and that its fruits are love.

Nothing can be more diſſimilar from the fruits of the ſpirit, than that little indulgence, which our mutual faults experience one from the other. The character and conduct of thoſe with whom we live, is not only a very natural, but a very neceſſary object of inquiry; w ſhould live, and act in the dark, we were not to make it; but t

ſtrong tendency to injuſtice, and ill nature is the thing to be corrected. Tear the veil off your heart, and look at it ſteadily, and boldly, for a keener eye than yours ſhall one day pierce into its deepeſt, darkeſt chambers. Is there no ſecret wiſh to find the imputation true, by which another is degraded? Is there no ſecret horror, that it ſhould be refuted? Do theſe ſentiments never lurk under the affectation of pity, and condolence? Have you never (as you hope for mercy; anſwer it to the judge within you) have you never concealed thoſe faults, and circumſtan-

ces, and conſiderations, which you knew would extenuate the guilt of an abſent and an accuſed perſon? Have you never ſat in the prudent ecſtacy of ſilence, and ſeen the fame of a good, or an eminent man mangled before your eyes? Have you never given credit, and circulation to the moſt contemptible, and improbable evidence of crime? Have you examined the guilt of your neighbour, as you would examine the guilt of your child, in heavineſs of heart, in all the reluctant wretchedneſs of conviction? Have you never added one line, or

one letter to evil report? never, in a bad hour, and with accurſed tongue, and with unbluſhing face, heaped up infamy on a better head than thine, and ſpoke that which was falſe of the helpleſs, the good, the wiſe, or the great? And if you have done it, if it form the daily habit of your life, what title have you to the name of Chriſtian? Or of what right do you call on Jeſus the merciful, and the good? Be not deceived; God is never ſcorned. Think you that he who ſet at nought the idle ſacrifice of the Jews, who would not eat bulls

fleſh, or drink the blood of goats, will be mocked with bended knees, and uplifted hands? Are we the diſciples of Chriſt, becauſe we ſtand at this prayer, and riſe at that, and ſanctify the face, and ſtrain at trifles, and fill the temple with the cry of God, God, and Lord, Lord? My brethren, if theſe are your notions of religion, you walk on deceitful aſhes, which will plunge your bodies in flame. Jeſus Chriſt the righteous came down from the mercy-ſeat of God to heal all our woes, and miniſter to all our infirmities, to ſoften the nature of man, and to

bend his heart to mercy: If you truly venerate his holy name, and firmly believe his paſſion, and agony on the croſs, walk in that ſpirit with which he walked on the earth; forgive, as you would be forgiven; do unto others, as you would they ſhould do unto you; judge your brethren in mercy, ſlow to condemn, and ſwift to forgive, bearing always upon you the fruits of the ſpirit, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, and goodneſs.

Another cauſe equally fatal to our progreſs in Chriſtianity, is that

proud conteſt for ſuperiority, ſo ſtrongly obſervable in ſociety.—— The fruits of the ſpirit are meekneſs.——

Few human creatures, indeed, are eminent either for birth, fortune, beauty, learning, or any thing on which the world ſet a value, without conſidering ſuch diſtinctions as a juſtification of pride in themſelves, or the want of it as a mark of degradation in others. The ſole object for which ſuch people mingle in ſociety, is, to diſplay what *they* poſſeſs, and to inſinuate

what the reſt of the world want. Their converſation is an eternal mixture of covert oſtentation, and oblique ſarcaſm; and they would ſeem to be certain beings of a ſuperior order, made by ſome better God, and hoping for a more ſelect ſalvation. The effect of Chriſtian faith upon daily behaviour is indeed ſcarcely diſcernible, if it exiſt at all; every one is the greateſt in his own eyes; our forms of ſpeech only are humble, our hearts are full of diſdain for our fellow-creatures; and they who are Chriſtians in this houſe, are mere creatures of

the world when they leave it. And yet I will be bold to ſay, that there is nothing in the humility of a Chriſtian incompatible with the elegance of a gentleman, and that fine manners may well flow from a pure heart; nay, that poliſh of manners, on which the world places ſo great, and perhaps ſo merited a value, proceeds chiefly from the indication of thoſe qualities, which it is ſo much the object of the Chriſtian religion to diffuſe. A man of graceful behaviour counterfeits humility; he throws a veil over his advantages, and perfections; he diſcovers the

hidden pretenſions of his company, brings them into light, and gives them brilliancy and force.—Nobody has any fault before him; he is blind, and deaf, and mute, with the moſt verſatile, and happy preciſion; he is gentle, long-ſuffering, and good. There is hardly any one Chriſtian quality which ſuch a man, actuated by the mere vanity of pleaſing, does not aſſume, to effect his object: Such oblique evidences in favour of Chriſtianity, has really ſome force, and ſeems to ſhow, that the diſpoſition of mind which it labours to inculcate, is pre-

ciſely that which would render human happineſs the greateſt, by rendering ſociety the moſt delightful; much more delightful than it ever can be, when we varniſh over our heart-burnings, and jealouſies, and envyings, and ſeditions, with Chriſtian faces, and more than Chriſtian language.

There muſt exiſt in ſociety diſtinction of rank, difference of natural endowments, and attainments, the effect of ſtudy; but God ordained this inequality amongſt mankind for wiſer purpoſes than to miniſter

to the pride of one being, and to wound the ſpirit of another. The mere knowledge of our ſuperiority, in particular points, is not criminal, becauſe it is frequently inevitable. It is the internal pride, and contemptuous treatment of others, founded on ſuch conſciouſneſs of ſuperiority, which violate a law of the goſpel moſt frequently repeated, and moſt clearly explained.

And after all, my brethren, take, I pray you, ſome quiet ſober moment of life, and add together the two ideas of pride, and of man; add them, if you can, without a ſmile; behold

him, a creature of a ſpan high, ſtrutting in infinite ſpace, with his ſhallow depth, and his cowardly courage, and his impotent ſtrength, darting diſdain from his eyes, in all the grandeur of littleneſs: Perched on a little ſpeck of the univerſe, every wind of heaven ſtrikes into his blood the coldneſs of death; his ſoul fleets from his body, like melody from the ſtring; day and night, as duſt on the wheel, he is rolled along the heavens, through a road of worlds, and all the ſyſtems, and creations of God are flaming above, and beneath; he is

an atom of atoms: Yet will this miſerable creature revel in his greatneſs, and make to himſelf a crown of glory, and deny his own fleſh and blood, and mock at his fellow, ſprung from that ſame duſt, to which they both will ſoon return.—Thou fool! what has pride to do with thee? If God hath given thee much gold in thy houſe, and made thee the ſon of honourable fathers, wilt thou lift up thy head above the children of men? Thou fool! not many days, and many nights, and the worms ſhall crawl over thee, and the worms ſhall crawl around thee, and thou ſhalt be a bag of rot-

tenneſs, and thy pomp ſhall lie hid in the grave.

It is not merely with groſs acts of vice, or with ſplendid virtues, that Chriſtianity is converſant. This is not the true genius, and nature of our religion; it deſcends even to that turn of mind, and ſentiment, which faſhions the deportment of man to man; it not only guards ſociety from daring enormities, but would render our lives more happy, by endearing cares, and engaging attentions; it teaches man to be gentle, and kind to his fellow, to

forbear with him, to forgive his foibles, to forget his injuries, to cheer the lowly with glad words, and kind looks. This civil and gracious ſpirit, is perhaps the trueſt teſt of your progreſs in Chriſtianity. Every one is ſubject to occaſional fits of generoſity, but a humane conſideration, and rational indulgence for others, evinced by a conſtant ſweetneſs of manner, is perhaps the moſt indiſputable proof, that Chriſtianity has ſunk deeply, and intimately into the heart. Do not let this ſeem a frivolous, and inadequate object for a divine lawgiver; it owes its

importance to the moral conſtitution of man. The cauſes of great happineſs and miſery, rarely occur; little circumſtances, and events that appear trifling, ſingly conſidered, make up the ſum of human enjoyment. The retroſpect of our paſt lives will ſhow us, that the greateſt misfortune we have ſuffered, is the ſum total of uſeleſs vexation inflicted on ourſelves, and others, from the want of this Chriſtian reſtraint upon temper, and Chriſtian incitement to benevolence.

Men are more pained by affront,

than by injury; affront implies the abſence of eſteem, and the preſence of contempt; and to gain the one, and avoid the other, ſeems to be almoſt the ruling paſſion of our lives. For wherefore are the greater part of mankind ſtudious of riches, but from the conſequence they reflect on their poſſeſſor? Of what good are hidden beauty, or concealed talent, or ſecret ſplendor of deſcent? All theſe we covet, as they enable us to move with greater dignity in the world. What is the ſting of poverty? not the privation of luxuries, but ridicule, and contempt,

which men die daily to avoid, be-becauſe they fear them worſe than death. Eſteem is the great ſtake for which we all play; and to ſhow a human being, not rendered infamous from crime, that you deſpiſe him, is a cruelty which ſavors little of that gentle religion we profeſs, or that merciful Redeemer we adore.

The worldly motives to cultivate the fruits of the ſpirit (though ſubordinate of courſe to thoſe of religion), are numerous, and ſtrong. The reſentment which proceeds from contempt, is as much to be

feared, as the affection excited by courteous treatment is to be deſired, and cheriſhed. It is wretched policy to ſtimulate any human being to a keen inſpection of your follies, and your faults, for no character can bear the microſcopic ſcrutiny of vindictive anger. Contempt never paſſes unobſerved, is ſeldom forgiven, and always returned with a rapid accumulation of intereſt. Every body makes league againſt inſolence; the misfortunes of an inſolent man, are a public rejoicing; his vices are exaggerated, his motives falſified, and his virtues forgot-

ten; he muſt humble himſelf in pain, and poverty, and aſhes, before the people can, or will forgive him: Whereas that ſecurity which ariſes from a conſciouſneſs of being generally beloved, is the great ſoother of life, and the moſt delightful ſenſation that any human being can enjoy. He who affects to deſpiſe the verdict, which the great tribunal of the world paſſes on his life and fame, ſays that which is not true, or that which is ſhameful, if it be true. The delicacy of our feelings, with regard to public opinion, is extreme: To hear that we have been

the ſubject of converſation in our abſence, creates a ſenſation of anxious alarm; we glance inſtantly at the weak parts of our character, at the offence we have given to, or the benevolence we have previouſly awakened in, our judges; and our hearts die within us, if we learn that we have been the object of general condemnation.

My brethren, to reflect that you are beloved as widely as you are known, to think that there are many abſent human beings, who bear to you the ſeeds of good will, and

kindneſs, and eſteem, is a ſentiment which will cheer the ſadneſs of life; you will live ſo as never to loſe it; it breathes a grateful tranquillity on the ſoul; it is a firm barrier to the waves of chance, a laſting, ſolid, happineſs, which you bear about you, like ſtrength, and health, earned by temperance, and toil. If ye would, then, that men ſhould love you, love ye alſo them, not with gentleneſs of face alone, and the ſhallow mockery of ſmiles, but in ſingleneſs of heart, in forbearance, judging mercifully, entering into the mind of thy brother, to ſpare

his pains, to prevent his wrath, to be unto him an eternal fountain of peace. Theſe are the fruits of the ſpirit, and this the ſoul which emanates from our ſacred religion: If ye bear theſe fruits now in the time of this life; if ye write theſe laws on the tablets of your hearts, ſo as ye not only ſay, but do them, then indeed are ye the true ſervants of Jeſus, and the children of his redemption: For you he came down from heaven; for you he was ſcorned, and hated upon earth; for you mangled on the croſs; and, at the laſt day, when the trumpet ſhall

ſound, and the earth melt, and the heavens groan, and die, ye ſhall ſpring up, from the duſt of the grave, the ever living ſpirits of God.

ON THE PRIDE OF BIRTH.

ISAIAH, chap. xix. v. 11.

How ſay ye, I am the ſon of the wiſe, the ſon of ancient kings? where are now thy wiſe men? let them tell thee now, and let them know what the Lord hath purpoſed upon Egypt.

IN this paſſage, Iſaiah pours forth his ſcorn upon the counſellors of the Egyptian court. "What avails "it (ſays he), that you boaſt your "deſcent from men of wiſdom, and "power!—your wiſe, and power-"ful forefathers are dead, and

" gone! where is your wiſdom to
" counſel your king aright, and to
" warn him of the terrors which
" God is preparing for him? When
" he calls upon you for your own
" virtues, and talents, you refer him
" back to the might of your fore-
" fathers, and ſcreen your own per-
" ſonal inſignificance in the ſplen-
" dour of your deſcent."

The charge which the prophet makes upon the Egyptian nobles, may, with ſome degree of juſtice, be extended to thoſe in modern times, who are perpetually remind-

ing the world directly, or indirectly, of the dignity of their anceſtors; and who, becauſe they have no living merit to boaſt of, are ever ſhrining themſelves in the glories of the dead.

It is very obvious to the meaneſt obſerver, that the world not only ſet a high value upon illuſtrious birth, but that it commonly obtains the preference over talents, and virtues; and this latter phenomenon has given birth to a querulous, and declamatory rage, which may be conſidered as entailed in

the family of the moraliſts, their indefeaſible chattel and heirloom.

The fact is unqueſtionably true, though the cenſure founded upon it is perhaps ſomewhat unjuſt: There muſt be a certain rule of precedence in ſociety, an arrangement of thoſe pretenſions we all exhibit for public notice, and reſpect; and thoſe cauſes which confer ſuperiority muſt be obvious, and not liable to be miſtaken; not chemical diſtinctions, diſcoverable upon analyſis, but natural marks, perceptible to the eye. Such, in ſome degree, are

wealth, and birth, the notoriety of which is much greater than that of talents, and virtues; for theſe latter are frequently not diſcovered till after intimate connection, and even then repeatedly miſtaken: The meaſure of them, though groſs, is difficult of application; they would unqueſtionably deſerve the preference, if they were more eaſily diſcovered; and from this defect alone, mankind, contrary to their inclinations, have eſtabliſhed a leſs worthy, and more perceptible cauſe of preference. For I believe that there is a much ſtronger diſpoſition

in our nature to venerate great qualities, than ſounding titles, and that the deference ſhown to the firſt, is but the type, and ſhadow of that holy enthuſiaſm we feel for the latter; for, at the ſight of thoſe by whoſe wiſdom we have been enlightened, by whoſe fancy we have been charmed, of heroic men, who, with rapid, and untroubled ſagacity, have ever reaſoned, and vanquiſhed in the midſt of death, the puny nobleneſs of birth is forgotten; we gaze in mute idolatry, and would fall down upon the earth to kiſs

the hem of their garments, and worſhip the duſt of their feet.

But though it be admitted that theſe be the cauſes which have given to birth the preference over the qualities of the head, and of the heart, a prior, and a curious queſtion preſents itſelf for ſolution: How comes birth to be reſpected at all?—The inveſtigation of it is practically important, becauſe it will enable thoſe who receive this homage, to determine whether or not they verify the ſuppoſitions upon which it is founded. In the upper

claſſes of life, a family is remarkable either for the length of time that its ſucceeding repreſentatives have been elevated ſo much above the vulgar, as to enjoy at leaſt a decent competence without labour, or from the tranſcendent, and notorious merit of any one of its line. This partly proceeds from aſſociation of ideas, and partly from a belief, half juſtified by experience, that the qualities of the parent mind are tranſmitted to children, or early imitated by them. Hiſtory teaches us to connect courage to one name, and counſel to another;

to connect them even to an eye, or a look; and it is difficult to behold the ſon or the deſcendant of an eminent man, without deluding ourſelves into an idea, that ſome ſhare of the virtues, as well as ſome trait of the features, has been tranſmitted from one to the other. A perſon placed in a liberal ſituation of life, above the neceſſity of increaſing his fortune, is ſuppoſed to have derived from education a cultivated underſtanding, and correct moral taſte; to be careful of reputation, and worthy of truſt, and (as we ſay in common language) re-

ſpectable; and, when a family has been long in this ſituation, we aſſociate theſe qualities to them much more ſtrongly, and are apt to conceive that a certain propriety of ſentiment has been tranſmitted with hereditaments, and lands, from one generation to another: It is therefore well to recollect, that the reverence mankind pay to birth is founded upon its ſuppoſed connection with great, or amiable qualities; that it is unjuſt to inhale the incenſe, without poſſeſſing the attributes to which it is offered up; and that no diſapprobation is ſo

complete, as that which ſucceeds to detected impoſture, and miſplaced regard.

Becauſe I cannot wiſh that any body in this place ſhould be indifferent to the bleſſings of our excellent conſtitution, or any thing which concerns it, I hope that you hear me with a certain degree of jealouſy, when I am treating upon the pride of birth; and I hope to convince you, before I have done, that ſuch jealouſy is as groundleſs, as it is admiſſible and wiſe.

The pride of birth, in common with every other ſpecies of pride, is utterly incompatible with the Chriſtian character, the very eſſence of which is lowlineſs of ſpirit; and in common with every other ſpecies of pride, is marked by narrow, and erroneous views of human nature. The peculiar objections to it are, that birth may frequently prove a ſource of the moſt ſerious misfortunes; that, at a certain period of depravity, it gives ſplendour to ſhame, and inflames the contempt of mankind; that it juſtifies the painful ſuſpicion of being beloved

from name, and not from nature; that, conſidered ſingly by itſelf, without the virtues which ſometimes do, and are always expected to, accompany it, it is of all cauſes of ſelf-approbation the leaſt rational, and juſt.

Though pride be the exceſs of ſelf-approbation, it can only reſt ultimately upon the approbation of others: It is always upon the eſteem of others, preſent or future, or upon a title to it, conceived to be extremely ſtrong, that pride is founded: A proud man may not

poſſeſs eſteem, but he muſt believe that he does poſſeſs it, or ſhall poſſeſs it, during life, or after death, or that he deſerves to poſſeſs it; for, if he conceives himſelf juſtly contemptible, he muſt ceaſe to be proud. Now all pride proceeds from a wrong notion of the method by which the approbation of others is ſecured; from a miſappretiation of ourſelves, and of the ſagacity of mankind, who are ſo far from adopting a man's ſtandard of himſelf as their own, that they commonly value a human being inverſely as he values himſelf: It proceeds

from an ignorance of that captivating modeſty, which lulls rivalry to ſleep, and gives all the benevolent affections their free influence upon the judgment. When a worldly motive to virtue can be added to a religious one, there is a double ſecurity for good conduct: Pride, then, is only another name for ignorance, becauſe it takes the moſt ſhort-ſighted, and inefficacious means to effect its object.

Travellers tell us, that there is a tree, the roots of which afford either bread, or poiſon, accordingly as they

are managed, and prepared; ſuch is the doubtful nature of illuſtrious birth; it may be a bleſſing, or a curſe; the ſource of virtue, or the cradle of ſhame; eminence it muſt ever give, eminence of infamy, or eminence of good.

A young man of high birth finds, upon his entrance into life, every thing prepared to his hands, for which the reſt of the world are compelled to labour. Every ſociety is open to him, and he confers diſtinction, rather than receives it, in every new acquaintance which he makes; he

has no motive to improvement, for he is already on a level with poets, and philoſophers, and receives as his birthright, the homage which is paid to genius, and judgment. Whatever merit he may poſſeſs, is witneſſed with complacency, and delight, and magnified beyond its value. His very faults, and follies, are frequently graceful, and popular; and he muſt be guilty of the utmoſt meanneſs, or of the moſt glaring enormity, before he can become infamous, or contemptible with the world. The advantage of learning his weakneſſes from the friendſhip, or the indignation of his compa-

nions (a copious ſource of improvement to ordinary men), is denied to a man of high birth; for thoſe who are not intereſted, are awed, and dazzled, and cannot free their minds from that deluſion which converts a conventional diſtinction into an eſſential ſuperiority of nature. They treat a noble companion with a degree of feminine indulgence, oppoſe him with mitigated contradiction, diſpenſe with the attentions expected from equals, and do not ſcruple in praiſing directly, or indirectly, to do ſome gentle rudeneſs, and petty violence

to truth. Is it not wiſe, then, with all this temptation to inactivity, and palliation of vice, that he who would call the attention of the world to his illuſtrious birth, ſhould pauſe for one moment, to reflect upon the ravages it may have committed upon his talents, and diſpoſition; ſhould tremble to draw the keen eye of man upon a frivolous and profligate life; ſhould aſk himſelf, whether he have the virtues, as well as the blazonry, of ancient men; if he have the head which the helmet covered, and the heart which beat under the buck-

ler, and the firm, and pure hands which wielded the globe of dominion; if he have any thing but names, and pedigree, and records, to ſcreen him from the hiſſings, and execrations of mankind? Shame to the weak and ungrateful man, who prides himſelf on the luſtre of a race, over which he alone has thrown diſgrace, and darkneſs. Your anceſtors enjoyed the conſideration of the world, why then have you loſt it? they were the pride of their country, and you are the reproach of yours; they made that name which you have diſgrac-

ed, and you call for the reſpect of mankind, upon that very plea which moſt powerfully reminds them of your unworthineſs. Make us forget, if you can, that you are nobly born, and we ſhall look on your vices, and your follies, with common reſentment, and ſimple diſdain; tell us, that the blood of great and amiable men flows in your veins, that you might have always had their venerable models before your eyes; tell us this, and we ſhall call you dead to every good feeling, bad in eſſence, and in ſoul, a traitor to the tombs, and virtues of your fathers.

Once again, before you fully decide upon the extent of this bleſſing of high birth, and indulge in the pride conſequent upon it, turn for a moment to the lot of the obſcure, and induſtrious man, who has partaken with you in the ſame bleſſings of liberal education; a man whom you view, probably with indifference, perhaps with pity, or contempt. He comes into the world with every poſſible diſadvantage, and not unfrequently converts all theſe diſadvantages into bleſſings, by making them new ſources of exertion; as he meets every where

with coldneſs, and difficulty of acceſs, and experiences little indulgence for his faults, he ſtrains every nerve to awaken the attention of mankind by his labour, and talents, and models his life, and manners with the utmoſt caution, and humility; as nothing that he ſays, or does, is ſeen through the medium of favour, he can truſt to ſolid merit alone for diſtinction, and at firſt ſeldom obtains all the reputation he deſerves; the early days of his life are paſſed in toil, and darkneſs; and in the midſt of all ſorts of privations, he is ſecretly laying the foun-

dation of the moſt ſolid reputation, and the moſt valuable character: From ſuch origin as this, ſpring every day ſome of the moſt illuſtrious men of which our country can boaſt; a fact, which reflects the higheſt honour on the ſtyle of thinking prevalent in this kingdom, when compared to many others in Europe, and on the admirable conſtitution by which we are governed. No friend to human happineſs can ſee, without the pureſt pleaſure, a great character riſing up from the dregs of the people, burſting into light, and glory, through the groſs

darkneſs of indigent humility, climbing to the higheſt honours of the land, and leaving behind him, after a long career of wiſdom, and of honour, the moſt brilliant, and laſting fame.

With high birth, there is generally ſaid to be high ſpirit; and the degrading ſuſpicion of being courted from their rank, and not from their merit, ought to ſtimulate men of noble extraction, to give ſubſtance, and ſolidity to their accidental, and factitious importance: The attention they meet with in the

world is ſurely very frequently not to themſelves; remove the title, and the name, the ſame being, whom every body courts, would ſink into the moſt inſignificant oblivion: It is not the man that is wanted, but the appellation; he is not brought there from feelings of regard, or from hope of amuſement, but to brighten the pageantry of the ſhow, and to heighten the ſplendour of the feaſt.

The friendſhips which a common perſon makes are probably ſolid; he has no reaſon to ſuſpect that he

is ſought for, but becauſe he pleaſes; the few who profeſs friendſhip to him may be preſumed to feel it, as here they can have no motive to counterfeit eſteem, or mimic regard. He who is nobly born, can rarely enjoy, in any purity, the feelings of exterior approbation, becauſe he can never tell from what motive it proceeds. It would be eaſy to detect groſs flattery; but groſs flattery has been laughed out of the world long ago, and is no more to be met with; the danger is, that the judgment of worthy, and valuable men, is in a great degree impoſed upon by rank;

few people but have drawn up in their own minds a ſhort code of eaſy, and pleaſant virtues, light expiations, and commodious atonements for the great; few judges who would not ſmooth the brow of criticiſm, as they read the effuſions of titled fancy; few reaſoners that have not found a royal road to proof, and been cheaply convinced by the poliſhed demonſtrations of well-born philoſophy. Is there not ſomething painful to a generous mind, to be thus ever allowed for, and excuſed, and ſpared, and indulged? Is it not better to ſcreen

yourſelf from this cruel ſervility, and that degradation of character to which it leads, by ſubmitting to thoſe ſalutary hardſhips of mind, which gives ſtrength to the inward man? to earn the admiration of the world before you contentedly receive it? to lay the ſolid foundation of reſpect, and praiſe, by holding ſacred public, and private happineſs, by a manly religion, by a liberal morality, by awakening, and training to excellence, every faculty which God has implanted in your ſoul, and by ſtriving, not only to excel others, but yourſelf?

But this pride of birth is to be kept within due bounds, not only by the efforts of thoſe who may be liable to be infected by it themſelves, but by the rational, moderate, and modeſt independence of thoſe who live with people of rank; for men do not ſo much meet with idolaters, becauſe they exalt themſelves into idols, as they exalt themſelves into idols, becauſe they meet with idolaters. When high conſideration degenerates into adulation, and ſervility, it is as dangerous, and diſgraceful to him who pays, as to

him who receives it; for to ſacrifice the love of truth, habitually to ſtifle the delicate, and ſacred ſenſe of good, and evil, from the fear of offending; to be the butt of peeviſh malice, to ſuffer a drowſy inobſervance of all pleaſant, and encouraging forms, and to tremble at the lower tables of the great, thunderſtruck with gilded domeſtics, and gorgeous feaſts; what is it but to corrupt, and be corrupted; to deſtroy all ſelf-reſpect; to teach a man that the ſmiles of the fortunate are more valuable than the friendſhip of his heart, or the favour of his

God? And is it wonder, when ſo many are ready to proſtrate themſelves with this immoral ſoftneſs, that the great ſhould ſometimes be corrupted, ſhould fancy in themſelves ſome innate ſublimity, and incarnate grandeur, which diſtinguiſh them from the maſs of followers, who will ſubmit to humour, caprice, indignity, and neglect, to dwell in the ſhadow of their preſence? He who corrupts an eminent man, by unworthy compliances, and ſubmiſſions, ſaps a pillar of the ſtate, and commits the moſt ſerious injury againſt his coun-

try, by vitiating a character which it is the intereſt of that country to preſerve in all poſſible purity: The depravity of an eminent man, from his increaſed power of doing harm, in perſon, or by example, and from his enlarged ſphere of action, is a ſerious national calamity.

This virtuous independence, founded upon the beſt, and moſt reſpectable principles, is very frequently mimicked, from fooliſh motives, or for bad purpoſes. There is a litigious jealouſy of our ſuperiors, breaking out in a conſtant ſu-

ſpicion of affront; an affectation of ſurly virtue, and republican ſimplicity, which a few ſmiles will ſoon melt into meanneſs, becauſe it proceeds from a ſecret reſentment at neglect. There is a natural diſcontent of inferiority, an unworthy pedantry of independence, which denies to rank the reſpect that ever ought to be paid to it, for the wiſe, and wholeſome purpoſes of ſubordination. Above all, there is that horrid paſſion of convulſing, and reverſing, which would place the foot of the clown upon the neck of the noble, which would bow to the

pandects, and decretals of peaſants, would make monarchs delve, and toil, and thruſt the ſacred gold of the ſceptre into hands that had ever clenched the ſcythe, and the ſpade. All theſe are the empty ſhadows, or wilful forgeries, of that decent firmneſs, with which a virtuous man pays all proper reſpect to thoſe whom the laws of his country make honourable, without loſing a proper reſpect to his own character, and underſtanding, without ſuffering himſelf to forget, either from awe, or from intereſt, his contempt of folly, or his indignation at vice.

I the rather inſiſt upon this method of living with our ſuperiors, becauſe I am convinced that a deſire of being noticed by the great, and of getting into their ſociety, is as generally, as it is naturally felt, and it is a deſire which requires to be directed rather than extinguiſhed. All good ſociety is neceſſarily ſelect. There are two ways of admiſſion, the one good, the other bad. To be called up to the higher walks of life, from a general conviction of your merit, is a very delightful, and honourable event; to arrive there by artifice, and to live

there by ſuffrance, is to intrigue for ſlavery, to court contempt, and to give notoriety to meanneſs. Let us enjoy either worthy fame, or contented obſcurity; publicity without approbation, neglect without tranquillity, compoſe the wretched medium. The loweſt man of the loweſt caſt in life, is more reſpectable, than thoſe miſplaced characters, who, in ſpite of all claſſification, and arrangement, have deviated into an order, to which every body ſees they do not naturally belong.

But though the pride of birth be, in common with all other pride, forbidden by religion, and bad, becauſe founded on ignorance, and error, ſtill it may be ſometimes indulged for ſuch admirable purpoſes, and converted to ſuch beneficial ends, that we are diſpoſed to view it with a conſiderable degree of indulgence. God forbid we ſhould not think of ancient days, if thus doing we can add virtue or happineſs to theſe; forbid us to ſtifle that ſolemn pleaſure which we feel in gazing at the dead, if that ſolemn pleaſure teach us to

live aright. If you will look upon nobleneſs of birth, as a promiſe to be fulfilled, and a debt to be paid to ſociety; if you will recompenſe mankind, by your perſonal merit, for their fervent love to your name, and fathers; and think exalted birth a ſolemn pledge for exalted virtue, a covenant for honourable labour, and unſpotted faith; an oath taken to the ſhades of the dead, never to pollute their blood, or ſully their fame; if you haſten to fix this admiration of words, and ſounds, upon ſome more ſolid foundation, to reflect more luſtre on

: race than you take from it,
to be the chief of the people in
ıght, and action, as well as by
ıce and law, then think for
on the greatneſs of your name,
the ſplendour of your fathers
ers; and when a prophet ſhall
you, yea, when more than a pro-
:, when the inquiring Angel of
ſhall aſk you, How have ye ſaid
ı earth, I am the ſon of wiſe
ıſellors and ancient kings? Ye
anſwer unto that ſpirit, " We
ıve ſo ſaid, oh Lord, not igno-
nt that all things on earth are
ıe ſhadows of a ſhadow, and the

" duſt of the duſt; but hoping like
" them to walk in the pure, and
" perfect law of him who made
" us, and to do the good, and right-
" eous things which our fathers
" have done of old time, that we
" may draw down upon us thy
" bleſſings, and finally partake of
" that dear, and unknown world
" which thy bleſſed and injured
" Son has promiſed us in thy
" name."

ON THE UNION OF INNOCENCE AND WISDOM.

MATTHEW, chap. x. v. 16.

ie ye wiſe as ſerpents, and harmleſs as doves.

IT is not then neceſſary that we hould ſhun the haunts of men, and y into ſolitude, and ſilence, for the reſervation of our innocence: Abence of temptation is not the only ecurity of virtue, nor ignorance he ſingle preſervative againſt vice. We may ſtudy the mazes of the uman heart, and preſerve the

righteous ſimplicity of our own; we may enter into all the trepidation of life with the purity of a hermit, and the virtue of a recluſe.

In theſe days of refined convenience, and rapid communication, when ſolitude is neither an act of religion, nor of neceſſity, when it is neither compulſory, nor devotional, this doctrine is full of conſolation, and importance; it is the faſhion to mingle with mankind, it is much to know that we can do it with im-

In this precept of our Saviour's, it is hardly neceſſary to obſerve, that he does not allude to ſpeculative wiſdom, but to the wiſdom of the world: with the abſtraction of ſcience, or the meditation of theory, his diſciples, in their dangerous, and active miſſion, could have nothing to do: a ſagacious notice of the human paſſions, a keen inquiſition into the powers, and foibles, the follies, and virtues of man, a ſelection of happy moments, a judicious deference to times, and occaſions; in ſhort, all thoſe attentions which would enable them to repel the

dangers, and advance the intereſts, of their miſſion; all theſe conſtituted that ſpecies of wiſdom, which our Saviour here preaches to his diſciples, exquiſite caution, and great goodneſs, the wiſdom of the ſerpent, and the innocence of the dove.

Under the cover of our Saviour's authority, we may proceed to attack an opinion, which has a conſiderable influence on the practice of many men, who are ruled more by vanity, than by any wiſe, and rational principles of conduct. Of

theſe there are not a few, who imagine innocence to be ſo incompatible with wiſdom, that after ſacrificing the leaſt ſplendid of the two, they think to riſe in intellect, as they ſink in morals, and, by degrading themſelves into men of vice, to exalt themſelves into men of talents: Woe to the earth, if there were not thoſe who had viewed the ſyſtem of life, with a more piercing eye, and a more perfect judgment; who are moral and good, from deliberate conviction; who are deliberately convinced, from a patient compariſon of guil-

ty indulgence, and virtuous reſtraint; and who, placing their happineſs in wiſdom, had ſhown their wiſdom by their innocence. Profligacy, indeed, may, or may not be united to ſplendid talents; but in profligacy itſelf there can ſurely be nothing which implies them. To make a firm ſtand againſt the paſſions; to wait reſolutely for the greater good, though remote; to ſacrifice the leſs, though preſent; and nobly to give up the gratifications of vanity, and ambition, when they are incompatible with our loyalty to mankind; all this implies much

ſelf-government; a power of impreſſing remote conſequences upon the mind; of eſcaping from our ſenſes, and bringing the diſtant, and future in review before us. It exalts us in the dignity of thinking beings: But who cannot run the career of unbluſhing impudence? who ever wanted to be infamous, and found it difficult to become ſo? who ever ſighed over that mediocrity of mind, which ſhut him out from ignominy, and ſhame, or lamented thoſe bounded faculties, which compelled him to be reſpectable, in ſpite of himſelf? It is very

eaſy to profane what the world has conſecrated, to ridicule what it reveres, to paſs over the boundaries it preſcribes: Whatever other conſolation vice may then have, it cannot be entitled to this; we ſhall not obtain the wiſdom of the ſerpent, in loſing the innocence of the dove.

The innocence which our Saviour recommends us to cultivate, muſt be underſtood in a much more comprehenſive ſenſe, than the world are apt to annex to this term. We are innocent, in a worldly ſenſe, if

we have committed no great crime; we are innocent, if we have neither contravened the laws of our country, or the laws of ſociety, in any eſſential points; but theſe tribunals judge the human heart from a very groſs intuition, and rule it with a very feeble controul. We may keep peace with ſociety, and modify our obſervable actions to its will, yet revel in bad pleaſures, and gratify malignant paſſions, with luxurious impunity. Human laws do not infuſe new inclinations, or create freſh tendencies; they prevent certain actions

by the operation of fear; thoſe who would be bad without them, are bad ſtill; the deſire of doing harm ſtill ſubſiſts, and will be gratified, whenever it can be ſo with impunity. It can hardly be neceſſary to obſerve, how often that impunity recurs. The malignity which dares not be avowed, may be maſked under the love of virtue, bold indignation at crime, or zealous vigilance of friendſhip. Innumerable, indeed, are thoſe arts, by which a heart, too cowardly for open vice, indulges a bad nature, in ſecurity, and ſucceſs: the faint ſurmiſe, half

ſhown, half concealed, which whets the edge of curioſity; thoſe artful doubts, which make malignity more terrible, by concealing it; that agonizing praiſe, which prudence extorts from envy; the ſuperficial, and politic compaſſion, which hides the black exultation of a fiend, and all the creeping paſſions, and grovelling feelings which caution dictates to villany, which nothing could generate, but the abominable union of cowardice, and vice. A truly innocent man has a heart clear, and pure as light; he admits no thought which the juſt would not

approve; he forms no deſign which the generous would not praiſe; he cheriſhes no ſecret reſentments, and before he has ceaſed to ſuffer, has begun to forgive; he neither follows fortune, nor hates the unhappy, he conciliates, ſoftens, and allays; his ways, are not ways of darkneſs; he courts inquiſition, and defies it; the ſhameful pleaſures that he might taſte in ſecret, are no pleaſures to him; if the world are abſent, he has God, and himſelf to fear; he thinks of what the juſt would ſay; their judgment is his conſcience, and the happineſs of man-

kind his reward. This is the purity of the goſpel, the truly unoffending ſpirit, the innocence of the dove.

Every body is aware of the neceſſity of ſtudying mankind, for the mere purpoſes of temporal convenience; at leaſt nobody would deny the utility of it, if the queſtion were put to them, or pretend, that time ſo employed was miſapplied; though there are many not deficient in acuteneſs, who know no more of mankind, than thoſe barren generalities in character, which events have forced upon their obſervation, and compelled them to

notice, almoſt in ſpite of themſelves. But if for any purpoſes of worldly intereſt we ought to ſtudy our fellow-creatures, the intereſts of morality convert a convenience into a duty; that which was always prudent, is now pious, and the droſs of human policy is converted into the precious ore of religion. One of the firſt ſteps, perhaps, to the knowledge of which we are ſpeaking, is, to reſiſt extreme ſyſtems, and to miſtruſt equally the effuſions of credulous benevolence, and the miſanthropy of angry wit. The man who has ſtudied his fellow-

creatures with ſucceſs, has neither read them in paſtorals, or in ſatires; it has been to him a ſcience of patient obſervation, and he has arrived at acute diſcrimination, by ſubmitting to diligent remark. Nor muſt it be forgotten, in viewing the paſſions of mankind, that we are not obſerving in a clear atmoſphere; that the ray of truth comes to us refracted through the medium of our own paſſions; and that to determine the quantity of this refraction, and ſo obtain a fair reſult, we muſt ſtudy, not only others, but ourſelves, not only the object of

inſpection, but the medium through which it is ſeen. Conſider what a vaſt ſuperiority this inſight into human nature muſt confer; the preponderance, the authority, not apparent perhaps, but real, and efficient, it muſt give; how much it muſt be to know the point of acceſs in every character, and to acquire the talent of diſentangling that complication of principles, which confuſes the moral obſerver, and of following out that ſubtle thread, which, with all its windings, and turnings, is ſtill a part of the predominant paſſion, which ſtamps and

diſtinguiſhes the individual man. The ſage, who knows mankind thoroughly, is ſkilled not only in the arts of inveſtigating, but of defenſive wiſdom; he ſees, and is inviſible; he hears in ſilence; his own counſels lie deep in his breaſt, and with them the counſels which others had not the ſkill to conceal. This man is learned in the human heart; he is quick, dexterous, and verſatile; he has the wiſdom of the ſerpent.

The importance of our Saviour's precept, and the neceſſity of com-

bining wiſdom with innocence, will be beſt learned by the conſequences of their diſunion; and before we view them mixed, and blended together, it may be well to examine them in their ſimple, and ſeparate appearance; for combination in morals, as well as in chemiſtry, may occaſion appearances, and properties, which the component parts, ſingly conſidered, never poſſeſſed.

And here let me aſk, Who has not ſeen the moſt amiable ſchemes of benevolence fall to the ground, for want of a little worldly wiſdom

to ſupport them? Who has not witneſſed ignorant philanthropy idly toiling for mankind, and by active errors, ardent miſtakes, and indefatigable perverſions, throwing a fatal, and pernicious ridicule upon the cauſe of virtuous exertion? And the misfortune is, that every plan of humanity which fails, is not only a triumph for the profligate, and ſelfiſh, but a plea for future inactivity, a palliation of apathy, a pretext which ſtays the hand of enterpriſing charity, in the moment it is uplifted to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to labour for the

bread, and eſtate of the poor, and oppreſſed.

Judgment indeed is ſo neceſſary a pilot to goodneſs, that it may be doubted whether the cauſe of virtue has ſuffered more from the intemperate aid of its friends, or the implacable activity of its enemies: An attempt at exceſſive purity of manners has before now given birth to the moſt diſſolute profligacy; and atheiſm has been reared into ſtrength, by the foſtering hand of ſuperſtition: So true it is, that mankind muſt be ſtudied before they

can be benefited, that ſomething more is wanting to benevolence, than mere purity of intention, and that the power of doing good, in the hands of a weak man, may prove one of the greateſt evils which ſociety has to deplore. If the bad are full of enterpriſe, and deſign; if intrigue cannot perplex, or labour weary them, what would become of the world, if every thing were ſimplicity, and unſuſpecting candour, on the ſide of the good; if they totally abjured all defenſive caution, prudent ſuſpicion, and ſage reſerve? Innocence alone would

firſt make them the dupes, then the inſtruments, and laſtly the proſelytes, of vice: This is the tottering career of innocence, when her footſteps are not guided by wiſdom; this it is to be harmleſs as the dove, without being wiſe as the ſerpent.

If theſe be the misfortunes which innocence, without wiſdom, entails upon mankind; if theſe the effects of their diſunion, which one ſide of the picture exhibits, let us turn to the other, and inſtead of error, we ſhall ſee crime; for benevolence that has failed in its object, iniqui-

ty that triumphs in ſucceſs; for the wanderings of untutored goodneſs, the ſure progreſs of wickedneſs guided by art. Terrible indeed to ſociety muſt that man be, who, to a profound knowledge of human nature, unites a total exemption from moral principle; he is a comet that moves in no orbit, and obeys no attraction, let looſe upon the ſyſtem, to wander, to deſolate, and conſume. What checks are there on ſuch a man? Where is the gripe of morality, the iron chain of conſcience, that can arreſt, or bind him? You cannot ſtimulate his generoſity, awa-

ken his juſtice, or melt his compaſſion; he has ſmoothed the impediment, and ſhaken off the incumbrance of virtue: The hopes which reſt on the fruſtrations of his ſchemes, are no better founded than thoſe which depend on the relics of his morals; he is as profoundly able, as he is eminently bad, is well read in the book of life, a veteran deceiver, and knows well the ſubject of his deceit; he has the wiſdom of the ſerpent, without the innocence of the dove.

In conſidering, laſtly, the great

benefits which accrue to mankind from the union of innocence, and wiſdom, we cannot but lament that the good ſeparate themſelves ſo much from the maſs of mankind, and differ from the habits, and manners of the world, in points that are not eſſential. This ill-timed dignity of virtue, deſtroys innumerable occaſions, which the good might ſeize on, of mingling in the ranks of pleaſure, diſcouraging veteran profligacy, fortifying incipient goodneſs, and fixing that volatile piety, which is always hovering between the love of vir-

tue, and the fear of ridicule. If to differ from mankind at large, in ſome ſubordinate points, and to ſtrain at ſlight deviations from perfect reaſon, and immaculate purity, be meant to anſwer the purpoſes of vanity, it may ſucceed; if it proceed from fanaticiſm, it is to be lamented; if meant to be uſeful, great pity it is that the ſuggeſtions of goodneſs have not been more tempered by the rules of wiſdom.

Great and momentous indeed would be the benefit conferred on mankind, if thoſe whom talent, and

opportunity have enabled to ſtudy the ways, and acquire the habits of the world, were the friends of virtue, and the advocates of religion. Habitual profeſſional inſtruction is not received perhaps with any very active attention, while voluntary admonition is attributed to the immediate preſſure of conviction, and the irreſiſtible force of truth. But if plain precepts, delivered in a plain way in this place, are not always without their impreſſion; if men, whom their ſituation in life neceſſarily compels to ſtudy the uſeful, more

than the ornamental, are ſometimes liſtened to with a favourable ear, when they are pleading in the cauſe of virtue, what power muſt they not have, who are acquainted with the heart, whoſe ſenſibility they are to awaken, and who have meaſured the underſtanding whoſe conviction they are to effect; who can give to truth the irreſiſtible efficacy of manner; who add the influence of the teacher to the weight of the precept, and derive a force as great from what they are, as from what they ſay?

It is a very common thing to meet with men extremely ſkilful in the ways of life; it is not uncommon to find others of the beſt, and pureſt intentions; but it is very rare to find great innocence, and talents, tempered together into one ſupreme, and prelucent character. Thoſe whom we denominate men of the world, cultivate, and acquire an exquiſite tact, with the view ſometimes of advancing their intereſts, at others of gratifying their vanity; and the influence they poſſeſs in ſociety (ſuppoſing a parity of other circumſtances), is very great. Let me

ſeriouſly put to ſuch men the infinite opportunities they have of doing good, which no other deſcription of men can pretend to; of maſking wiſdom, in wit, and gaiety; of being pleaſantly good, and careleſsly inſtructive; and of ſtrewing, as ſays the poet, many a roſe-bud in the paths of youth. Opinions among the maſs of mankind are purely epidemical; they break out among a few leaders, and ſpread rapidly amongſt the upper multitudes, as amongſt the lower. Such men as I have been deſcribing, are thoſe leaders; and though they

cannot entirely change the habits of the diſſolute, and trifling beings who look up to them, they may produce a wonderful effect towards their correction, and improvement. One ſuch man gained over to the cauſe of morality, and the great intereſts of mankind, is a treaſure to the world: He has ſtudied the human mind, to heal, and to amend it, and directs the beſt wiſdom to the beſt object: In him benevolence is not fruſtrated by folly, or villany guided by talents; but that which is planned in virtue is executed by wiſdom; fortune leagues

with juſtice, and the counſel which merits ſucceſs, obtains it: Here are the limits of our nature, and the boundaries of all human perfection, when power and virtue meet together, when this union of purity and intellect exhibit in the ſame mind, the wiſdom of the ſerpent, and the innocence of the dove.

* A FAREWEL SERMON TO A COUNTRY PARISH.

PROVERBS, chap. iv. v. 13.

Take faſt hold of inſtruction.

As every ſituation in life has its peculiar duties, ſo is it expoſed to its peculiar errors, and infirmities; and we have not only to guard againſt the common vices of our nature, but thoſe to which we are ſubjected from conſtitution, ſitua-

* This ſermon was preached to a congregation of poor labourers.

tion, connection, and every ſource of difference which can occur in individuals of the ſame ſpecies.

No ſyſtem of inſtruction could poſſibly be ſo valuable, as that, which diſtinguiſhed the preciſe condition of every individual, and accommodated itſelf to thoſe circumſtances which ſeparated him from his fellow-creatures; juſt as medicine can never be ſo uſeful, as when the phyſician is acquainted with the conſtitutional peculiarities of the perſon to be relieved.

But as ſuch a minute application of precepts from the pulpit is impoſſible, we muſt do what good we can, and content ourſelves with a leſs elaborate, and more general advice, claſſing men from their rank in life, and omitting the conſideration of thoſe differences, which are more difficult to be perceived, and too numerous to be detailed.

In purſuance of this idea, I ſhall draw a ſhort, and ſimple ſketch of thoſe duties which the ſituation of a labouring man more immediately calls upon him to fulfil, and of

thoſe faults which it is of the moſt importance he ſhould avoid. This is the laſt time I ſhall ever addreſs you from this place: I am much in earneſt, and wiſh to be uſeful; God grant for your ſakes, and for mine, that the effect may anſwer to the intention.

I ſhall begin by holding out to your notice thoſe vices moſt obſervable amongſt the common people, and to which their condition of life more particularly expoſes them.

The firſt, and moſt fatal, is drunkenneſs. It would be a ridiculous waſte of argument, and time, to prove what every body admits, and to aſſert what nobody denies; for, amongſt the many people given to intoxication, whom I have queſtioned, I never met with one who did not wiſh to diveſt himſelf of this habit, and who was not free to confeſs, that his greateſt misfortunes, as well as moſt painful ſenſations of mind, and body, were owing to this vice.

If drunkenneſs ended only with

degrading a man to the ſtate of a beaſt, it might not be ſo bad: But can a man anſwer to himſelf, when he has loſt his reaſon, that there is any one crime he may not commit? The eaſtern people have a tale, which is very common among them, and which I ſhall repeat, leaving it to you to make the application. They ſay, that the bad ſpirit tempted a holy man to commit one of theſe crimes, inceſt, or murder, or to make himſelf drunk: the man choſe the latter, as thinking it the leaſt crime; but when he was drunk, and had loſt his reaſon,

the devil tempted him to commit the other two.

In all ranks of life this crime is deſpicable, and dangerous; but a poor man cannot intoxicate himſelf, without ſtarving his wife, and children. Is not this enough to awaken reflection, that you muſt be guilty in the end, and in the means; that you muſt wade through a bad crime to commit worſe; and that, in order to extinguiſh your reaſon, and put yourſelf in a diſpoſition for the commiſſion of every crime, you

muſt ſubject to want and ruin the tendereſt objects of your affections.

I would recommend to you a ſtrict regard to truth. Our virtues, and vices are formed, in a great meaſure, from opinion: In the higher claſſes of life, a breach of truth is conſidered as more infamous than in the lower, and the virtue therefore is in greater requeſt. But mere opinion is not the meaſure of virtue, and vice; a lie is a very ſerious offence againſt God, and againſt man. Mutual faith is the great cement of ſociety; and God,

under whoſe providence the fabric of ſocial order has been reared, will not forgive thoſe enormities which threaten it with deſtruction. Beſides, leaving out the conſiderations of morality, and religion, I am aſtoniſhed, my good brethren, that you do not eſtabliſh a character for telling truth, for your own advantage. A lie may profit a man once, or twice, but he will ſoon be found out, and never afterwards believed; but the advantages of a good name, the reputation of being a truſty ſervant, will befriend a

man through life, and be the ſource to him of profit, as well as honour.

The neceſſity of attendance upon public worſhip, I have more than once impreſſed upon your notice. So painful is thought, and ſo difficult is it to dwell upon thoſe duties which check the glow of ſenſe, the current of buſineſs, the impetuoſity of paſſion, ſo hard is it to receive, ſo eaſy to loſe, religious impreſſions, that without the recurrent incitements, the repeated admonitions of this day, man would long ago have been ſevered from

his Creator, and the chain which reaches from heaven to earth would have been broke aſunder. Religion is certainly no interruption to the reſt which a labouring man requires on a Sunday; and to innocent pleaſure after the ſervice of the day is over, there can be no great objection. Let no man feel himſelf too ſecure from groſs impiety, and vice, in the abhorrence he feels to great crimes; it is a ſecurity as long as it laſts; but it is eaſily weakened, diminiſhed, deſtroyed. Solemn prayer to God, ſerious reflections, indulged at ſtated intervals,

can alone cheriſh the ſpirit of religion, and make the pulſe of conſcience healthy, regular, and ſtrong; and here it is, in this place, and among our fellow Chriſtians, that our prayers are to be preferred, that God will hear our requeſts, and grant that which is moſt expedient for us.

Another circumſtance of great importance, is, the duty which you owe to your children. Difference of ſituation can make no difference in natural affection; a poor man loves his children with the ſame

warmth as a monarch; but then he has little leiſure, and is not perhaps aware of the extreme danger of leaving children to themſelves, and ſuffering bad habits, and licentious paſſions, to puſh on their roots, and flouriſh in ſo freſh, and fertile ſoil. Half the bad men in the world have become ſo from a neglected education: Whatever is impreſſed upon the youthful mind, whether good, or bad, is retained with great firmneſs. Look through all nature, in animals, as well as in men, every habit that remains, was inculcated when the ſubject was young; and

every effort to change, and to amend them, in old age, is tedious, difficult, and almoſt impoſſible. The duties of a parent are awful, and ſacred; the ſoul of his child is in his hands; he may make it good, and virtuous, and light up in it the fear of God, and the ſpirit of wiſdom; he may give to his country a good citizen, to ſociety an upright man, to heaven a pure, and hallowed ſpirit, fit for ſalvation; and before man, and God, is he guilty, if he neglects his charge. All duties, of courſe, muſt be regulated by the ability to fulfil them;

the poor, to be ſure, cannot do much for their children; but what little they can do is expected from them: At all events, they can avail themſelves of the munificence of other people, however limited their own powers may be. * The Sunday ſchool, which, with ſome trouble and expence, has been brought to the ſtate in which you ſee it, will afford to the pooreſt people an opportunity of giving to their children ſome ſhare of education; and

* A Sunday ſchool, planned, and ſupported, by a very reſpectable country gentleman in the pariſh.

I will not ſuppoſe that any body can be ſo indolent, and ſo unprincipled, as not to exact from their children a regular attendance upon it. I ſincerely exhort you, and beg of you now, for the laſt time, that after this inſtitution has been got into ſome kind of order, you will not ſuffer it to fall to ruin by your own negligence. I have lived among your children, and have taught them myſelf, and have ſeen them improve, and I know it will make them better, and happier men; and I put this to you and dwell upon it, not only from a ſenſe

of duty, but from the proper feelings of a man, becauſe I love the little ſubdiviſion of ſociety in which I have lived, and am not, nor ever ſhall be, indifferent to its intereſts.

The principle of thriſt, and economy, ſo neceſſary at all times to a poor man, is doubly ſo now, when we are ſuffering under the preſſure of ſcarcity. Every farthing idly ſpent at this time, is ſo much taken from the firſt wants of nature; and every labourer muſt be indeed loſt to all proper, and prudential reflections, whom theſe times will not

frighten into economy. When I talk of theſe times, it muſt be ſome conſolation to you to reflect, that if your own induſtry will not ſupport you, you have a claim upon the pariſh for ſupport; and for this you ſhould love your country, for there is no other country in the world where ſuch a cuſtom obtains, but in this. But remember, this is a laſt reſource; for baſe, and bad is that man, who would not rather earn his bread by the ſweat of his brow, than be beholden for it to the charity of another; but then, on the other hand, that is a miſtaken

pride which induces really induſtrious people to ſuffer every ſtage of diſtreſs, rather than apply for relief: If a man has made uſe of every exertion to ſupport himſelf, without ſucceſs, he has every claim of juſtice, and humanity, to aſſiſtance; nor ought the leaſt diſgrace, or ignominy, to attach to ſuch a claimant. I mention theſe things, becauſe inſtances occur every day, of people who are faulty on both ſides of the queſtion, of thoſe who aſk without wanting, and of thoſe who want without aſking; the one fault proceeds from diſhoneſty, the

other leads to deſpair, and conſequently both are proper ſubjects for animadverſion in this place.

Having thus, for the laſt time, dwelt upon thoſe ſubjects, which appeared to me moſt to require your attention, and mine alſo, it remains only that I bid you farewel: May plenty, and peace attend you; may God crown you with all human proſperity; may you die the death of the good, and juſt, and riſe like them to an immortal exiſtence.

ON VANITY.

Ecclesiastes, chap. i. v. 14.

Behold, all is vanity, and vexation of ſpirit.

Thoſe vices are not always the moſt dangerous, which are the moſt rapid of operation: But as effects ſtrike moſt the ſenſes when they follow immediately from their cauſes, ſuch vices have been more accurately obſerved, and more clearly explained, than any others. In the mean time, there are many

habits of thought little noticed, and little feared, which pollute no leſs effectually the ſprings of the heart, and degrade the moral dignity of man. We ſhudder at falſehood, at ingratitude, at neglect of ſerious duties, at hardneſs of heart: We look at vanity with a ſmile of contempt, at the vanity of the young, and gay, with a ſmile of indulgence; it ſeems, to our improvident view, an harmleſs, gaudy plant, that has ſprung in the luxuriant ſoil of youth, and will quickly be dried up in more mature age; in the mean time, up it climbs, and ſtrangles in

its graſp the towering, and lordly paſſions of the ſoul.

I mean by vanity, the exceſſive love of praiſe, and I call it exceſſive, whenever it becomes a motive to action; for to make men indifferent to the praiſes of their fellow-creatures, as a conſequence of their actions, is not, that I know of, any where enjoined by our ſacred religion, nor would it be wiſe, if it were poſſible.

The vanity of great men, when it ſtimulates them to exertions uſe-

ful to mankind, is that ſpecies of vanity which ſeems to approach the neareſt to virtue, and which we moſt readily pardon for its effects; and, indeed, ſo much are we inclined to view actions by their ſplendour, or their importance, rather than by their motives, that we can hardly agree to call by the name of vain, a man who has exerciſed conſummate, and ſucceſsful ability, upon great objects; whereas, there is a vanity of great, and a vanity of little minds, and the ſame paſſion regulates a ceremony, which rules, or ruins a kingdom. It is bet-

ter, to be ſure, that good, if it cannot be done from the beſt, ſhould be done from any motive, rather than not be done at all; but the dignity of the fact can never communicate purity to the intention. True virtue conſiſts, not only in action, but in the mind with which we act; and the higheſt beneficence which flows from vanity, though it may exalt us in the eyes of men, abaſes us in the view of God.

It is curious to obſerve this verſatile paſſion, in all the forms under which it loves to exiſt; every

will think on every occaſion, what leiſure is there for reflection on thoſe ſolemn duties which you owe to your fellow-creatures? God has not truſted theſe duties to the reaſon, but has warned you to compaſſion by inward feelings: Theſe feelings ſoon ceaſe to admoniſh, when they are unheeded; and the voice of humanity, when it has often ſpoken in vain, ſpeaks no more. To-day, you move with beating heart along the golden ranks of pleaſure, and to-morrow, and to-morrow, new joys, and new triumphs await you. Soon the cry

of him who wants bread will come up no more to your ear; ſoon you will turn from the ſad aſpect of age, and your heart will become ſhut to the miſeries of man, never again to be opened.

The havock which vanity makes on the ſocial feelings, is as conſpicuous as that which it exerciſes on thoſe of compaſſion: One of the moſt painful ſymptoms it produces, is an impatience of home. The vain man has no new triumphs to make over his family, or his kindred; their ſociety becomes tedi-

ous, and inſupportable to him; he flies to every public circle for relief, where the hope of being admired lightens up in him that gaiety, which never beams on thoſe who ought to be the neareſt to his heart. Thus it is that the lives of many, in great cities, are paſſed in crowds, and frittered away in a conſtant recurrence of the ſame frivolous amuſements. After the poignant gratifications of vanity, every other ſpecies of ſenſation becomes inſipid; the mind ſhrinks from duty, and from improvement, and the whole character becomes trifling,

and degraded. It is eaſy to miſrepreſent theſe obſervations, by ſuppoſing them to be levelled againſt pleaſure, and amuſement in general; whereas, it is not only lawful to enjoy the innocent pleaſures of ſociety in moderation, but it is unwiſe not to enjoy them. It is that pleaſure I cenſure, which becomes a buſineſs, and corrupts the heart, inſtead of exhilarating the ſpirits; and upon this part of my ſubject I muſt be allowed the liberty of addreſſing a few words to the female part of my audience in particular. Dignity of character is a very ſubtle

thing, and, as the guardian of many virtues, ſhould be carefully preſerved; but if there be any one fault which extinguiſhes amiable, and pious ſentiment, hardens the heart, deſtroys delicacy of manners, and wipes off the bloom from the female mind, it is conſtant, and eternal diſſipation. Be aſſured, that the very eſſence of pleaſure is rarity; that admiration, too eagerly purſued, infallibly leads to contempt; and that the qualities of mind, and perſon which produce the greateſt effect, are thoſe of which the poſſeſſor is the moſt profoundly ignorant.

It is ſo little the habit of mankind in general, to look to the conſequences of things, that vanity has been ſtrangely denominated an innocent foible; and yet there is not a ſingle virtue which it does not degrade, nor a ſingle vice to which it does not lead. Look to the many families reduced to ruin from oſtentatious expence; the laborious profligate, who drudges at debauchery, that the world may applaud his ſpirit; the ſhallow deiſt, who laughs, and trembles; the quibbling atheiſt, who prays in ſecret; the weak tribe, who follow fortune, and hate

the unhappy; cadaverous age, lingering in the haunts of pleaſure, and ſummoned from the dance to the grave; ſee ruined women, and miſguided ſtateſmen, and miſtaken ſages, beautiful talents, and heroic qualities, and princely virtues, ſunk down to the duſt, and the ſad majeſtic fall of men, whom nature ſent forth to rule, and to enlighten the earth. Go now, and humble thy heart, and look not to men for praiſe, but to God; ſo ſhalt thou fear no evil; ſo ſhalt thou move with a firm ſtep, through this valley of the ſhadow of death: The

Lord ſhall be thy ſhepherd, and lead thee forth beſide the green paſtures, and convert thy ſoul, and place thee beſide the waters of comfort.

Vanity is not only a dangerous paſſion, but it is an abſurd paſſion, as it does not in general attain the end it propoſes to itſelf. The way to gain wealth, is to ſeek it. Learning is only acquired by conſtant, and eager labour; but to gain praiſe, you muſt be indifferent to it, for the rule of commendation is, and ought to be, the very re-

verſe of the rule of charity; to give moſt to thoſe who want it leaſt, and thus by ill ſucceſs, to teach a better motive to action. Vanity is every day detected, and diſgraced; we know men who believe themſelves to be objects of univerſal admiration, while, in fact, they are objects of univerſal contempt; we ſee how difficult it is to conceal the paſſion, or prevent the ridicule conſequent upon it; yet we are vain, and believe that acute malice will be blind for us alone: We are as little admoniſhed to be ſimple, from the charming effects of ſimplicity, but

either make no change, or imagine we can act a ſimplicity better than the ſimplicity of nature.

A vain man looks more to the pleaſure, than to the means of triumph, and experiences defeat, becauſe he ſings the ſong of victory, while he ſhould be ſpreading his ranks for the battle. If he ſucceed, he loſes even the inaccurate meaſure of himſelf, which he before poſſeſſed, attempts greater, and ſtill greater achievments, and is ſure at laſt to fail; becauſe it is the eaſieſt of all

things to find difficulties, ſuperior to human power.

It muſt be from the moſt lamentable want of ſelf-examination, that this vice is ever found in the Chriſtian mind. Chriſtianity conſiſts not only in what we do, and in what we avoid, but in the ſentiments we encourage, and the habits of thinking we gradually acquire. A vain Chriſtian may have faith, and he may have conformity; he may worſhip, and believe; but where is his humble ſoul, his mild, and ſteady wiſdom, and his awful

ſenſe of the ever-during preſence of God? Theſe are the ſweet virtues on which this worm of vanity doth paſture, and theſe the miſerable relics of Chriſtianity which it leaves behind.

A very vain perſon, is ſeldom a very happy perſon; he lives under no certain law; the rule of his conduct is the caprice of his company; he never knows to-day what he is to do to-morrow, and is conſtantly acting a part, before an audience, who become difficult to pleaſe, in proportion as he is deſirous to pleaſe

them; he lives in conſtant perturbation, and is ever flushed with triumph, or pale with deſpair; he is a ſlave in eſſence, who feels that he has not dignity to be free, and erects every man he meets into a maſter, and lord.

The wiſe man enjoys the ſupreme comfort of living under general rules; he is ever dignified, becauſe ever conſiſtent; he avoids the miſery of doubt, and follows a clear line of conduct through all times, and ſeaſons, and events. While the world are in good humour

with him, he enjoys their praiſe as an accidental good, though he never ſeeks it as an ultimate object. If the rectitude of his motives be not underſtood, he wraps himſelf in his virtue, and gazes from the adamantine temple of conſcience at the ſtorm which rolls and ravages beneath: The will of God, declared by his Son Jeſus Chriſt, is the guide of his life, and he moves through this earth with fear, and fortune beneath his feet, and with heaven open to his view.

This love of praiſe, ſo ſtrongly in-

fixed in our nature, it is rather our duty to direct, than to extinguish: The excellence which requires neither to be encouraged, or corrected, exists not in this world: The commendation, or the censure of enlightened men, is perhaps the best test here below, of the purity, and wisdom of what we intend, and the propriety, and success of what we do; and a wise man will always make this use of the decisions of the world: When he is blamed, he will listen with sacred modesty to the collected wisdom of many men; he will measure back his footsteps

on the paths of life, and which ever way he decides, he will know that he has either obtained ſucceſs, or deſerved it; he will receive praiſe as a probable, not as a certain evidence that he is right; nay, he will do more, he will rejoice in the approbation of his fellow creatures; every feeling of his heart will expand; it will cheer him in his long ſtruggle, and diſſipate that melancholy which the beſt ſometimes feel at the triumph of folly, or the fortune of vice.

I have thus endeavoured to convince you of the danger of this

widely diffuſed, and little ſuſpected paſſion of vanity, and to ſhow you that it injures the underſtanding, that it injures the heart, that it injures the Chriſtian character, that it defeats its own end, and, while it ſues for admiration, inſures contempt: Be it your care to watch its baneful influence, and to live from nobler motives. Do you wiſh for the praiſe of man? ceaſe then to purſue it; live that life which, ſoon, or late, leads to honour in this world, and to eternity in the next; be juſt, be modeſt, be charitable; love dearly your fellow-

creatures, and number your days by the miſeries you have leſſened, and the bleſſings you have diffuſed. Study your own heart with the patience of a Chriſtian, coolly mark, and ſteadily reſiſt the tendency to wrong. Let wiſdom ever increaſe with decay, and the ſoul gather new light as its covering crumbles into duſt. Do you think ſuch a life as this will not ſecure to you more effectually the ſweets of praiſe, than all the toils, and all the vexations of vanity? Yes; you will reign in the hearts of men; you will move amongſt them like the angel of wiſ-

dom, and peace; and when, in the fulneſs of years, and in the fulneſs of honours, you reſt for the ſhort ſabaoth of the tomb, the cold dull earth which falls upon your bier, ſhall be a cruel ſound to the poor, the wretched, and the good; a whole city ſhall gather round your grave, and weep over their guide, their father, and their friend.

ON THE TREATMENT OF SERVANTS.

COLOSSIANS, chap. iv. v. 1.

Maſters, give unto your ſervants that which is juſt, and equal, knowing that ye alſo have a Maſter in heaven.

UPON firſt turning our mind to conſider thoſe cauſes which preſerve any ſociety in a ſtate of order, and regularity, we are apt to attribute this effect to the laws alone, and to believe that it is principally the fear of puniſhment, which inculcates

one line of conduct, and diſcourages another; whereas, the fact is, that if the welfare of mankind depended alone upon the ſtruggle of two hoſtile principles, the paſſion which urged to the commiſſion of the crime, on the one hand, and the law that prohibited it, on the other, there had been an end long ſince of human aſſociation, and refinement; and man, after ſuch a vain experiment to better his condition, and improve his nature, had returned to his ancient woods, with a fierceneſs confirmed by experi-

ment, and a barbarity reſumed upon ſyſtem.

If the law has not a very powerful aſſiſtance, and co-operation, it can never cope with human depravity. Accordingly, beſides the great, and cardinal ſupport of religion, we ſee education, and opinion, diſciplining the mind of man to a ſtate of wholeſome obedience, and preparing him for thoſe wiſe reſtraints, upon which the very exiſtence of ſociety depends. To theſe auxiliaries of the law may be added another very important one,

I mean family government, the moſt ſimple, the moſt natural, and the moſt ancient of all governments. How very much virtue, and religion muſt be promoted by the due exerciſe of this authority, in all its branches, is too plain to be proved; the beſt adminiſtered governments muſt miſtake much, and overlook much; it is of courſe impoſſible that they can deſcend to inſpect the lives, and conducts of individuals, and regulate, with minute, and laborious juſtice, the proportion of merit and reward. Now, the chiefs of a family have an inti-

mate knowledge of every individual in it, a lively intereſt in the rectitude of their conduct, and an influence over them, to which nobody elſe can pretend. It is not my intention to treat of every branch of family government, but ſimply of that to which my text relates, the connection between maſter, and ſervant. The ſubject is an humble one, and little ſuſceptible of ornament: but it is of daily occurrence; and, as a conſiderable ſhare of our comfort depends upon it, it certainly makes up in utility, what it loſes in dignity. It is a very eaſy thing

to ſay of a religion, that it has a tendency to aſſuage human paſſions, and ſoften human manners; we muſt juſtify our praiſe, by exemplifying it, and coming home to the buſineſs, and boſoms of men, ſhow in moral detail what Chriſtianity exacts from the huſband, the father, the maſter, and the ſon; and thus make eulogium rational, by giving a clear view of the ſpecific excellencies on which it is founded.

To a Chriſtian beſides, the duties he owes to any claſs of his fellow-

creatures, however low they may be placed beneath him in wealth, and rank, can never be but a ſerious, and ſolemn concern; for he bears within him a levelling faith, which ſhould beat down the pride of man to the duſt, ſhould tell him, that the pooreſt creature in his own ſhape has a ſoul, which came from God, and before God will ſtand in judgment, at that day when the firſt ſhall be laſt, and the laſt be firſt, and all fleſh ſhall be changed.

It may be neceſſary to obſerve,

that I mean ſimply to conſider the connection between maſter, and ſervant, on one ſide only; not the duty which a ſervant owes to his maſter, but that which a maſter owes to his ſervant, conſidering this as the only part of the ſubject which can be particularly applicable, and intereſting to my preſent audience; nor ſhall I go on touching methodically upon every common duty, but ſhall content myſelf with mentioning only the moſt common faults which we are apt to commit in fulfilling this relation of life. I hope you will not think the ſubject I have choſen too low, or too parti-

cular for diſcuſſion in this place; let us never forget that the real teſt of Chriſtian merit is action, and that if we are not Chriſtians in the daily, and common tranſactions of our life, the ardour of devotion, and ſincerity of our belief, by evincing that we know the rule which we neglect, and the lawgiver whom we diſobey, are proofs of our guilt, and not of our virtue. I the more inſiſt on this, becauſe it is the eaſieſt, and moſt common of all things to deceive ourſelves, and to ſubſtitute, inſtead of the toil of moral emendation, an overheated fancy, and an

undoubting faith, and then to believe that we are doing our duty to God, and man.

I think I may very fairly begin with laying this down as a rule, that we owe to thoſe placed under us, gentle language, and a kind, and benevolent deportment. We are all of us enough diſpoſed to allow, and to make eulogiums upon Chriſtianity, as a beneficent ſyſtem of morals. In this commendation, the ſceptic has ſhown an equal alacrity with the Chriſtian; but do we imagine that our Saviour, in the

zeal with which he every where promotes the happineſs of mankind, while he endeavours to throw open every compaſſionate heart as an aſylum for the afflicted, and to make the good an altar for the miſerable; do we imagine, that while he remembered the bodily wants, he forgot the moral feelings of man? that he has not reſtrained the ſallies of paſſion, as much as he has quickened the emotions of pity? the ſame merciful Chriſt, who ſays, give of your abundance to thoſe who have little, who bids you comfort the man who is un-

happy, forbids you to add woe to woe, to build ſorrow upon ſervitude, and to break down the heart of thy bondſman, who has no help but from thee, with ſcornful looks, and galling words.

Man ſeizes greedily upon every little ſource of diſtinction, which falls within his reach; his perpetual effort is, to ſcrape together every conſideration which can exalt him in his own mind above his fellow-creatures; and the unwatched tendency of all his thoughts is conſtantly to exaggerate the import-

ance of his own claims, and preten-ſions, and to diminiſh thoſe of o-thers. We are compelled to re-ſpect, in a conſiderable degree, the rights of our equals; but thoſe of our inferiors, in this inſtance of language, and manner, we ſome-times cruelly neglect; and the man who is tremblingly alive to the pre-ſervation of his moſt minute privi-leges, who is ready, in conformity with the notions of the times, to expoſe his life upon the leaſt af-front, or the leaſt ſhadow of an affront, will trample, without a mo-ment of humane reflection, upon

the honeſt feelings of a fellow-creature, who, though he have never enjoyed the goods of fortune, partakes of the common ſentiments of our nature, and, in proportion as his lot of life is leſs enviable, merits from every good man a treatment more kind.

Do not let us fall into the hard-hearted miſtake, that becauſe men are born in a low ſtation of life, and humbly educated, they have not a conſiderable, and a powerful ſhare of feelings: We think that humble men are to be moved only

by a ſenſe of gain, and that all uſage is nearly indifferent to them, if their meat, and drink, and cloathing be the ſame; but there are many of them who would go from good fare to kind words, who would be content with a leſs pittance from the hand of a gentle, and juſt man, and think, with the proverb, that it were better to dine off herbs, where love was, than to have a ſtalled ox, and hatred therewith. And have we never heard of ſervants, whom no reverſe of their maſter's fortune has ever tempted to deſert him? who have

ſacrificed the long-cheriſhed hope of liberty, and competency in their old age, to follow a diſgraced, an exiled, a needy man, in all his miſeries? who have given their body for his ſhield, and their hands for his ſupport? and all this without the moſt diſtant hope of a reward? And why?—not becauſe he has fed and clothed them, (for the labourer is worthy of his hire, and recompence is rather juſtice than benevolence), but becauſe they have never been debaſed in their own eyes by ſcornful lan-

ge, have never been goaded by

unworthy treatment; becauſe they have met with men, who have not thought the feelings of their poor dependants too inſignificant a ſubject for conſideration, and ſelf-reſtraint; becauſe they have been thought of, eſteemed, and valued. Theſe are the moſt acceptable gifts which one human being can beſtow upon another, and when they come from him whom fortune, and condition ſurround with dignity, to him who has nothing to command the reſpect of the world, from the maſter to the ſervant, they win the human heart, and form an attach-

ment as indiſſoluble, perhaps, as ſubſiſts in the world.

Diſtinction of ranks there muſt be in every ſociety, and it is moſt devoutly to be wiſhed, that the good ſenſe, and firmneſs of this country may ever preſerve them; but it is the peculiar province of religious inſtruction, to teach that conſiderate mildneſs which ſoftens down the line of demarcation between the orders of mankind, which allays the natural diſcontent of inferiority, by amiable conceſſion, and renders the obedience of the

lower claſſes certain, and ſolid, by rendering it willing. There is one very ſtriking advantage in this amiable behaviour to our domeſtics, for thoſe who are engaged in the truly noble occupation of gradually correcting, and improving their characters; it affords a conſtant exerciſe for the virtues of juſtice, and moderation, and it is in the boſom of their families, and in the midſt of thoſe who are the daily witneſſes of their actions, that men ought to render virtue habitual to themſelves; but inſtead of rendering their home a ſchool of probation, and exerciſe,

they too often look upon it as a place of reſt from every noble effort, as a retreat, where they are exempted from the painful reſtraints of moderation, juſtice, and complacency: Hence it is that in theſe little ſubdiviſions of ſociety, in families, where the world is fenced off, where one roof ſhelters thoſe whom nature intended to be ſo dear to each other, that the neareſt kindred are ſo often the conſtant ſource of each others miſery, and inquietude; and hence it is that when we meet together in the world, we do not bring into each

others ſociety virtues, but the ſymbols of virtues; we are not moderate, or juſt, or benevolent, but we counterfeit theſe virtues for the time being; and the actions of men are not here any proofs of amiable qualities, but of adroit, and ſyſtematic impoſture.

This unchriſtian-like conduct to ſervants does not always proceed from a bad heart; many are guilty of it, who have much of compaſſion, and goodneſs in their nature; but it ſeems to proceed from a notion early imbibed, and never effec-

tually checked, and aided by our natural indolence, and pride, that a ſenſe of thoſe injuries which are conveyed by manner, and expreſſions, is almoſt excluſively confined to thoſe whoſe minds are refined by education, or whoſe condition is ennobled by birth. But in ſpite of all the ills which poverty can inflict, no human being is baſe, or abject in his own eyes. Without wealth, or beauty, or learning, or fame, nay, without one ſoul in all the earth that harbours a thought of him, without a place where to lay his head, loathſome from diſ-

eaſe, and ſhunned by men, the pooreſt outcaſt has ſtill ſomething for which he cheriſhes and foſters himſelf; he has ſtill ſome one pride in reſerve, and you may ſtill make his tears more bitter, and his heart more heavy; do not then take away from men who give you their labour for their bread, thoſe feelings of ſelf-complacency, which are dear to all conditions, but doubly dear to this; do not take away that from thy poor brother, which cheers him in his toil, which gives him a light heart, and wipes the ſweat from his brow; and be thou

good and kind to him, and ſpeak gentle words to him, for the ſtrength of his youth is thine, and when his old age cometh, he hath no pleaſure in thoſe days; and know thou that there is above a God, whom thou cannot aſk to pardon thy follies, and thy crimes, if thou forgiveſt not alſo the treſpaſſes which are done againſt thee.

There is another point, in which the maſters of families do not fulfil this relation in a very exemplary manner, and that is, in attention to the moral diſcipline of their ſer-

vants. The truth is, that if maſters be well ſerved, they buſy themſelves very little farther with any thing elſe, and ſuffer many faults to paſs unnoticed, which do not interfere with their own individual comfort; but is this the duty of a good member of the community, or of a good Chriſtian? The maſter of a family has an opportunity of informing himſelf of the character of every individual in it, more minutely than any other perſon can do; he derives a moſt important weight from his ſituation, and a little temperate,

judicious, and dignified advice from him, will reclaim many a thoughtleſs young perſon from deſtruction, much more effectually than any public, and general inſtruction can be ſuppoſed to do. It is not eaſy to conceive any thing more reſpectable, more uſeful, and more religious, than the conduct of the maſter of a family, who would condeſcend, in this manner, to take into his hands the moral guidance of his ſervants, and to uſe his influence over them, only to make them wiſer, and better men: That theſe exertions would afford

to any body a moſt ample, and abundant return, there can be little reaſon to doubt: Such a man would feel, in the firſt place, that moſt pure, and perfect of all pleaſures, the pleaſure of doing good; he would be conſcious that he had laid up, againſt the hour of death, and the day of affliction, a ſtore of complacent reflection, and many remembrances of a well-ſpent life; his too would be the ſingular fortune of uniting his duty with his immediate intereſt; for will any human being be long faithful to his worldly maſter, who has few, and

imperfect notions of any other? or can there be a greater ſecurity for faithful, and ready obedience, than a mind ſolemnly impreſſed with notions of wrong and right, and rouſed to a love of virtue, and a dread of vice?

There is not perhaps a more pleaſant ſpectacle, than a well-ordered family, where the good ſenſe, and benevolence of the ſuperiors, diffuſe comfort, and content to the meaneſt individual of which it is compoſed; where the kindneſs of the maſter is reflected back in the

alacrity of the ſervant; where command is dictated by reaſon, and obedience comes from the heart. There is here no conteſt, whether one ſhall evade, or the other exact the moſt; but generoſity on the one ſide has begotten fidelity on the other, and two different orders of men are bound together in the common bonds of intereſt, and affection: This houſe is the tabernacle of peace; here it is that virtue, and religion love to dwell; and if the great God ever give us, in this melancholy vale, to taſte one drop of heavenly comfort, in ſuch a

calm, and wiſe, and religious ſtate, that bleſſing is ſurely conferred; good and ſurrounded by the good, making uſe of the ſuperior ſituation to which fortune has exalted you, to influence your inferiors in the cauſe of virtue, ſuffering no bad, no indifferent character near you, but by the inceſſant efforts of benevolence, and example, tranſmuting, and ſubliming every heart into moral, and Chriſtian excellence. This it is to imitate our great Creator, who for ages has ſeen the nations of the earth gliding away under his throne, and the people mad with

folly, and crime; yet he has looked on, and ſpared us; we are not ſwallowed up; he is a merciful, and a good God, and he ſtill ſhows us the light of his countenance, and he opens his hand, and fills all things living with plenteouſneſs. Do thou, therefore, unto thy ſervants, that which is juſt, and equal, knowing that thou haſt ſuch a Maſter in heaven.

ON MEN OF THE WORLD.

ROMANS xii. v. 2.

Be not conformed to this world.

I SHALL dedicate my ſermon of this day to the examination of a very common, and a very complex character in ſociety; that I mean of men of the world, a deſcription of perſons ſo far from having obeyed the injunction of the apoſtle, that they have received an appella-

tion directly ſignificant of their diſobedience to it.

When vice ſtands unallied, we deſcry an enemy, and prepare for attack, or defence; but vice, in union and compact with agreeable qualities, and accompliſhments, preſents an inſidious combination, which requires the cloſe attention of the moraliſt, becauſe it veils the danger which it augments.

Strange havock is made in our opinions by words; appellations frequently convey a cenſure, and a

blame, which the ideas they ſignify certainly would not do; and definition ſeems as neceſſary in morals, as it is in grammar. It is enough for the purpoſes of ſhame, or honour, to affix certain phraſes, or terms to a name; what is the real import of theſe words, and what good, and evil, they really convey, few people give themſelves the trouble to conſider. Hence, if a looſe expreſſion be ſet up, ſignificant of ſome popular qualities, the adjacent vices will ſoon connect themſelves with theſe welcome gueſts, and bidding, under cover

of their name, defiance to the indolent ſearch made for them, they will ſhare in common the indulgence, and approbation of the world.

The appellation of a man of the world, can in ſtrictneſs mean nothing more, than a perſon, who, by long mingling with his fellow-creatures, has acquired a knowledge of human nature, together with thoſe habits, and manners which prevail in that caſt of ſociety which gives the law to the reſt. Good manners, and ſkill in character, contri-

have it much to the general happineſs, that this appellation of man of the world, would very juſtly render pedantry, if it were found to mean nothing more. It is not a knowledge of the world, properly ſo called, that can ever be the ſubject of condemnation in this place; to be ignorant of men, can never be the way to live well amongſt them; but thoſe vices which have been fraudulently interwoven with this pleaſant, and important knowledge, ſhould be torn off. We ſhould toſs out the aſp which lies

hidden in the baſket of fruit: Death is a hard price for delight.

In the firſt place, the appellation of a man of the world, has become a protection for irreligion.

When I proceed to eſtimate the religion of a man of the world, no one will imagine me about to draw a very ſavage picture of ſeverity, and gloom. Some little relaxation of ſelf-denial will be anticipated, and ſome little deviation from unerring rectitude: It will be no ſtory of the cowl, and the cloiſter; of

the burning lamp, and the midnight prayer; of the altar ever charged with oblation, and the organ ever ſounding with praiſe. I do not mean to be unjuſt in the delineation of character; injuſtice of this kind is impolitic, and immoral; but I am not afraid of being ſevere, while I confine myſelf to truth. We are placed here to remind, to warn, to detect, to caution, to entreat, to blame, and to praiſe; and that man is a traitor to the moſt ſacred truſt, who thunders grief, and terror, to diſguſting, aukward, vice, and holds parley with enchanting

error, and popular impurity, and delicious ſin.

A man of the world is rarely or ever ſeen in any place of public worſhip; a ſpirited, and, if poſſible, a witty contempt for religion, is the moſt gaudy, indiſpenſable feather in his whole plume. If he happen not yet to have ſhaken off his religion internally, which in the beginning of his career may perhaps be the caſe, he muſt indulge only in furtive ſupplication, and retire to his own chamber, not to avoid the oſtentation, but the imputation of

piety. As a man of the world becomes older, and more a man of the world, he may perhaps become a conformiſt, and comply with the outward ceremonies of religion, ſtill taking care it is privately underſtood, he is there to humour the world; that his contempt for theſe things is in no ways diminiſhed; that he ſtill thinks religion the buſineſs of women, and children, and prieſts: His object is, to impreſs mankind with a notion of his verſatility; he inſinuates that he would fall in with the reigning worſhip, wherever he might be placed, and

change his adoration with his climate; and you cannot more effectually pique, or puniſh his vanity, than by miſtaking him for a devout man, ſeriouſly impreſſed with the truths of religion. This ſingular, and impious affectation, proceeds from a deſire of appearing to have eſcaped from thoſe unſocial, and unpleaſant qualities, with which religion is in our imagination ſo fatally connected; an aſſociation ſtrengthened by that period of our hiſtory, when irreligion was the only teſt of genuine loyalty, or elegant extraction. But this union between diſaffection, and

devotion, is now not only diſſolved, but reverſed, and religion is clearly no longer the parent of barbarous, and auſtere manners: As far as it affects manners at all, it teaches the reality of every amiable quality, of which knowledge of the world teaches us to counterfeit the appearance, and changes a ſyſtem of conventional fraud, and ſanctioned falſehood, into a ſolid commerce of benevolence, and mutual indulgence. A man of the world, though he have no learned diſbelief of ſacred things, but rather an habitual careleſſneſs concerning

them, is ſtill the author of much ſerious miſchief to the cauſe of religion; he is always hovering upon the borders of conſecrated ground, and watching his opportunity to make light, and ſucceſsful incurſions upon it; and when the outworks of religion are attacked by a popular character, with humour, and pleaſantry, we are defrauded into a ſmile, or dare not ſtop the acclamations of contagious mirth, with the warnings of deliberate, and principled auſterity; in the mean time, the reverential awe in which education has enſhrined every holy

thought, and every holy name, is gradually diſſipated; and the beſt pledge of all that is valuable in character, or admirable in action, trucked away with the ignorance of children, for the ſtudied facilities, and graceful trifles, and brilliant nothings, of ſhameleſs, ſenſeleſs, ſilly men.

The morality of a man of the world amounts to little more than prudence, and does not always come up to that; he is aware of the allowance that is made for him, and ſins up to the full extent of his

meaſure; he muſt be always ready to ſacrifice his own life, or to take that of another; in gaming, he muſt obſerve the ſtricteſt faith, and, in general, muſt abſtain from all vices that are neither elegant, or intereſting: With theſe limits, he is let looſe upon public happineſs, to plunder, and debauch, without penalty, or ſhame. Take, for inſtance, the happineſs of a private family, as it depends upon the unſullied dignity, and ſpotleſs life of its females. Is there one of thoſe whom we call men of the world, whom any thing but fear would

prevent from poiſoning the heart, and laying waſte the principles, and virtues of women? Is there one who could ſcare this licentious cruelty from his ſoul, with the frown of religious magnanimity? Is there one who would not bluſh to be ſuſpected of ſuch a virtue? And is there one who would find in the countenances of all he met, one pungent, biting look, to tell him he was a wicked, baſe, unchriſtian, diſhonourable man?

But though it be admitted that theſe, and many other bad vices,

too often mark the character of a man of the world, "ſtill" (it will be urged) "he has his peculiar excel-" lencies, as well as defects, and the "former of theſe juſtify, in ſome "meaſure, the admiration of the "world, and give ſuch a man a "title to our love, if not to our e-"ſteem; one of theſe palliating vir-"tues is certainly generoſity."

If a man of the world be generous, it muſt at leaſt be allowed he is more frequently ſo with other people's property than his own: The great check upon generoſity, is the

neceſſity of employing wealth for the ordinary wants of life; but he who lives in the world on free quarter, and defrauds a thouſand honeſt men of their due, may toſs away his bounty with a profuſion, admirable enough to the multitude, but which, in fact, is the profligacy of a robber, not the generoſity of a magnanimous man. In all matters of compact, or agreement, it is the invariable maxim of men of the world to take every advantage, which the ignorance of the contracting party, or the ambiguity of law, will permit; and this not more

from avarice, than from vanity, because, above all things, mankind muſt be impreſſed with a notion of his dexterity; and if he give way to a ſenſe of generoſity, or juſtice, it will be preſumed he has not ſeen the advantage he has relinquiſhed.

Another ſource of diſtinction, to which this claſs of perſons lay claim, is, an exemption from prejudices; a claim of ſuch high importance, that I am afraid no claſs of men, and very few individuals of any claſs, are entitled to make it. A long commerce with the world,

though it frequently extinguiſh principle, ſeems only to commute prejudices. In the world, the prop of friendſhip is little wanted; the ties of blood forgotten, the ardour of youthful benevolence blunted, whatever amuſes, is virtue, whatever tires, vice; a callous contempt for mankind, diſpenſing with all active benevolence, is riveted on the mind for ever. This is frequent enough in the world; but for prejudice, men reaſon as badly, and retain their opinions as obſtinately, in crowds, as in ſolitude. If a ſecluded man want experience to correct

his reflection, an active man wants reflection to infer juſtly from his experience; if the one be too little intereſted to obſerve minutely, the other is too much intereſted to obſerve candidly; ſo that there is nothing in the life of a man of the world, that ſhould impart to his mind a greater degree of liberality, though his licentiouſneſs, and indifference to all opinion, may frequently lead us to ſuppoſe ſo.

Nothing excites the ridicule of a man of the world more powerfully than any hypotheſis concerning

public virtue, or ſuppoſition that the maſs of mankind are not a fair object of plunder, and deception. You can hardly preſent to him a better opportunity for ſarcaſm, or a more decided evidence of your own pedantry, and ignorance of the world; to him, office, and legiſlation are as much objects of ſale, as the drugs, or the ſpices of the merchant; he is ever ready to truck the public happineſs for what it will fetch; and when he ſpeaks of the importance of his truſt, you may be ſure he means to enhance the price of his treaſon. It is vain

to talk of innovations, and to call out for a multiplication of checks in government; the root of the evil is the laxity of all public principle: From this ſchool of the world, ſwarms of diſciples will ever be ready to put to ſale the wiſeſt inſtitutions, and the ableſt laws, and the moſt ſacred truſts.

Perhaps this man, to whom you open your doors, is a gameſter;—what then!—you are none;—you can enjoy the pleaſure of his ſociety, without dreading the corruption of his example:—Forgetful, unhap-

py man! have you no pity on the melancholy ignorance of youth? This bad man, this ſtranger, will lead your ſon down to the paths of hell; you will be forced perhaps to betroth your daughter to a gameſter; you may live to ſee a good child want bread; a gentle, kind-hearted woman, the prey of madneſs, and of rage; a meek, ſpotleſs wife, ſinking over her ſuicide huſband bathed in blood, and the laſt breath of life fleeting, and the ſoul rent away from its writhing, mangled body. Such are the idols of our admiration! Such the models to

which the eyes of the young are directed; ſuch the men before whom virtue is abaſhed, and wiſdom ſtill; who make us all bluſh for our ſuperannuated principles, and ruſtic integrity, and plebeian faith.

The progreſs of opinions is curious, and inſtructive: Virtue is ſo delightful, whenever it is perceived, that men have found it their intereſt to cultivate manners, which are in fact the appearances of certain virtues; and now we are come to love the ſign better than the thing ſignified, and indubitably to prefer

(though we never own it), manners without virtue, to virtue without manners.

Men who have only this merit of exterior to plead, would be ranked with ſome greater regard to juſtice, if their judges were more governed by the ſuggeſtions of conſcience, and reflection, than by the tyranny of faſhion. The univerſal object ſeems to be, not to do what we think right, but to do what is done, to avoid ſingularity: Self-approbation, the vicegerent of God, and legitimate monarch of our actions,

is depoſed: We voluntarily ſubmit to the government of the multitude, obey the mandate we diſapprove, and employ all the force of ridicule to make other people as ſlaviſhly irrational as ourſelves. Without a certain diſregard to the opinions of the world, or rather that maſs of people engaged in diſſipation, who call themſelves the world, there can be neither wiſdom of conduct, or happineſs, the reſult of it. Singularity, as a motive to action, has juſtly experienced all the ridicule it has received; ſingularity, as a neceſſary conſequence

of our obedience to the dictates of propriety, and good ſenſe, it is the duty of every man to incur, and if he cannot deſpiſe the ridicule conſequent upon it, at leaſt to bear it. Give this ſelf-called world its full dominion over trifles, up to the very confines of morality, and religion, but not a ſtep beyond; here make your ſtand, or be for ever loſt. There is a latent ſenſe of their own unworthineſs in every multitude, in none more than in that called the world; they are ever ready to flee from the erect aſpect of wiſdom, and of courage;

they will begin with ſcoffing at your independence, and end with reſpecting it. Join with that world in the admiration of poliſh, refinement, and urbanity; delight in that graceful mutability of ſoul, which takes its tone, and tenor from every external object; in that ſubdued energy, which always charms, and never exceeds; in that learned exerciſe of talent, which gives pleaſure without exciting envy; in that infatuating courteſy of deſpotiſm, which makes liberty nauſeous, and every man a willing ſlave. But let not that

ſacred vigilance ſlumber, which watches over evil, and good. The faireſt of all things are religion, and virtue, for the want of which, all the accompliſhments of the outward man are wretched atonements. Nothing can compenſate for their abſence; no price, however ſplendid, and impoſing, can purchaſe that, which is above all human value, and calculation, and eſteem.

The conviction which theſe plain, and obvious remarks may carry with them, will be eluded by

that common ſtyle of reaſoning, which gives vigour, and duration to every poſſible fault: " A ſingle " example can do nothing; the " world will ſtill go on as it has " always done; bad men will ſtill " find protecting names, and im- " poſing pretences; the individual " who withſtands it, will become " ridiculous, the fault remain as " popular as ever." The misfortue is, that this objection is made with bad faith, and can as well be anſwered by thoſe who make, as by thoſe who ſtate it. No individual is called upon to bear the whole

of character to deviate materially from the cuſtoms of the world, in this patronage of folly, and eſtimation of vice, need not go all lengths; ſome ſcanty limits, and ſome feeble ſhame, they may ſtill preſerve, and watch over the crumbling barriers of virtue, which ſtill totter on their baſe. God forbid I ſhould mean to ſay, that a fellow-creature ought neceſſarily to be the object of averſion, becauſe he has mingled with great numbers, and great varieties of his ſpecies; a thouſand virtues may reſult from the ſchool of the world, which a

ſpeculative life can with difficulty infuſe: A human being who has ever cultivated his underſtanding, and preſerved an unſpotted integrity amidſt all the buſineſs of life, exhibits, perhaps, the fineſt model of character which this world can produce: If you meet with ſuch a man, take him to you, and make him your choſen friend, and worſhip him with kindneſs, and good deeds, and knit his heart to thine own.

Many other men of the world doubtleſs there are, who have had

the good ſenſe, or the good fortu
to conduct themſelves with a d
cent propriety, which, in the ſpi
of Chriſtian indulgence, may entitl
them to the favour they experience
But when the term, of a man of
the world, becomes the paſs-word
to all ſociety; when the character
is the admiration of one ſex, and
the model for imitation in the o-
ther; when irreligious men, diſho-
neſt men, gameſters, ſeducers, adul-
terers, ungrateful ſons, unjuſt huſ-
bands, neglectful parents, ſhameleſs,
infamous women; when every po-
liſhed aſſaſſin, and every ſmooth

thief, find ſhelter, and forgiveneſs for their crimes, in this term of knowledge of the world, it becomes the imperious duty of every reflecting man, to ſift well this fatal, ſhuffling word, to be careful, as far as his own efforts, and example extend, to make infamy, and neglect, the puniſhment of vice, and not to give the ſanction of his name, and ſociety, to an infamous, immoral character, though birth, wit, fortune, and manners, all conſpire to render it the idol of the world.

FOR THE SWISS.

ISAIAH, chap. xxxiv. v. 3.

The mountains are melted with their blood.

WITH the pleaſure which I always feel in addreſſing you on any ſubject of charity, may be mingled perhaps on this particular occaſion, ſome diſtant ſenſe of national honour, and ſome ſmall ſhare of national pride; for it has ever been the great, and memorable privilege

of this iſland, to ſtand forward as the early, and eager champion of all the miſeries of man; and though other nations may have ſought, and may have gained in arms, and in arts, a name equally glorious with our own, none have ever cheriſhed the wretched ſtranger as we have done, none have ſo ſheltered the weary exile of other lands; none have miniſtered, with ſuch melting humanity, to aliens in ſpeech, and blood, who kneeled before us venerable in miſery, and pleaded the kindred of misfortune: For when did any people ever fall from

their high eſtate, and there was no one of us to lament them? When was any country ever ſmitten, and afflicted, and we did not lift them up from the duſt? What victims of war, of tyranny, and perſecution, have we ever driven back from our ſhores? What ſpecies of ſorrow have we rejected? What ſhape of miſery have we deſpiſed?

Allow me to call to your recollection, a few of the moſt prominent inſtances of Britiſh charity, exhibited to foreign nations in the courſe of this century. It is plea-

ſant to hear of the virtues of our country; the good deeds our fathers have done, will warm our hearts to mercy; their generation is paſt away, and they are all ſleeping in their tombs; but their blood gives us life, and all their great thoughts yet beat in the boſoms of their children.

When the poor Palatines preſented themſelves at the gates of the metropolis, every Britiſh heart was rouſed to a pitch of enthuſiaſm for their relief: It could not be endured, that a ſad, and motley crowd

of men, and women, ſhould lie on the bare ground, under the open wintry heaven, begging humbly, and piteouſly for food; they drank of our cup; they were warmed with the fleece of our ſheep; the tears of theſe poor creatures were dried up, and their hearts opened to new proſpects of joy.

Not leſs conſpicuous was the charity of this iſland, at that dreadful epoch when the city of Liſbon was overturned by an earthquake, and one dreadful day made of a beautiful metropolis, a heap of hi-

deous ruins. It was from the quick, and efficacious bounty of the Britiſh people, that they experienced the firſt dawn of relief; the bleſſings of all ranks of people were ſhowered upon us: King, and peaſant, were melted by our compaſſion; and wretched mothers, that lingered weeping over the ſtones of the city, which covered the mangled bodies of their children, could ſpare one prayer to Heaven for their benefactors, and their friends.

Why ſhould I remind you of the late unparalleled inſtance of good-

neſs, and generoſity, ſhown to the poor French emigrants; a generoſity which want, and privation of every kind, has not been able to relax, or to extinguiſh. In the midſt of a bloody war, carried on by their own countrymen for our deſtruction, we have expended one million and a half of money, in ſupport of the French who have ſought an aſylum amongſt us; and while the blood of our brothers, and our friends, has been flowing from the ſwords of their kindred, they have lived tranquilly amongſt us, in the peace of our laws, and the plenty of our land.

Induced, by theſe ſplendid examples of national feeling, the poor people of Switzerland come tremblingly before you, to beg ſome ſmall relief in their wretchedneſs: They come to you, not with the look of freemen, but in tears, and in chains, naked, and hungered, and broken-hearted: The vallies yet ring with their cries, the mountains are wet with their blood, they have been ſmitten, and ſlaughtered, and ſpoiled. Mighty God! Switzerland begging to Europe for charity!—Switzerland, where the humbleſt peaſant would have bluſh-

ed to have ſought his ſupport, but from the ſtrength of his arm, and the energy of his ſoul!—Switzerland, which ſeemed one vaſt family, ruled by the ſame ſpirit of activity!—Switzerland, where ſimplicity, and peace, and joy, had fled from courts, and empires, to dwell in the awful boſom of her eternal mountains.

I certainly do feel ſome little embarraſſment in preſſing the misfortunes of the Swiſs upon your notice, when the neceſſities of your own poor, ſeem to put in ſo much more imperious a claim to your

generoſity. But this claim of your own poor, it ſhould be remembered, has been already heard, and allowed; a very large ſum has been ſubſcribed for their relief, and a much larger ſum would, if it were neceſſary, be raiſed with the ſame facility.

Neither does it follow, that the pittance raiſed upon this occaſion, ſhould be ſubtracted from your domeſtic charities. In the preſent poſture of affairs, many good people will be, I am ſure, induced to ſacrifice ſomewhat of their amuſements,

or even of their comforts, to their conviction of the general miſeries of Europe; and upon this truly Chriſtian ſpirit, you muſt allow me to ſay, from my preſent experience of this country, that I place the firmeſt, and moſt rational reliance. Beſides, too, I never will ſubſcribe to that doctrine, which confines the feelings of humanity to the more wealthy, and educated claſſes of mankind. The poor feel acutely for thoſe whoſe miſeries are greater than their own. Suffering, as the Scotch peaſantry are in this melancholy ſeaſon of ſcarcity, if it

were poſſible to give them a clear conception of the ancient ſtate of ſociety in Switzerland, of that happineſs from which the Swiſs have been precipitated, and the abject miſery to which they have been reduced, do you think they would grudge theſe poor creatures the charity you may extend to them? No! ſuffering as they are, they would break off a morſel of their bread for the poor Swiſs, and would add one other pang of hunger to the ſorrows of their hearts.

Amidſt all the enormities of the

French revolution, no one circumſtance perhaps has excited ſuch general ſympathy, and indignation, as the fall of Switzerland. With the name of Switzerland has been connected from our earlieſt years, all the worthy feelings of the heart, and all the exquiſite beauties of nature, all that the eye of taſte, or the ſoul of benevolence, could require; a race of brave, and happy, and good men animated her ſolemn rocks and glens; the climbing ſtep of freedom had ſcanned the ſummit of the mountains, the unwearied hand of labour had drawn from the

barren rock green herb for the uſe of men; the peaſant with his plough, and his ſword, and his book, was at once a tiller of the earth, a ſoldier, and a Chriſtian; at whiles too, the ſound of the tabret, and the harp, would pierce through the roar of their torrents, and groups of the people of the country would dance in decent mirth, with the look, and the eye, and the ſtep of free, and happy men. It is a comely, and pleaſant thing to ſee the ſons of men, when they have gathered in the kindly fruits of the earth, indulging in

theſe innocent joys; for the poor man is then no longer poor, nor is the weary man faint; but he ſaith, God is good, there is corn, and wine for my children in the bad ſeaſon; I will make my ſoul glad: And he looketh in the face of his fellow, and joy is there, and he waxeth happy; and thus the wretchedneſs of man's days is beguiled, and for one good moment there is peace, and pleaſure over all.

Let thoſe ſpeak who have wandered into this ſweet country, and witneſſed the rural amuſements of

its people. Was ever happineſs more complete? Could imagination paint a more enviable lot upon earth, or could the earth afford it? For ſix hundred years they had remained firm as their native mountains, amidſt all the convulſions of Europe; for two hundred years they had hardly drawn the ſword, or never drawn it but to conquer: "They were a choſen "land, beloved of God; and while "the wrathful hail ſmote the lands "about them, in their fields was "no hail ſeen."

Into theſe hallowed retreats, in the midſt of a ſolemn truce, in ſpite of the ſtrict neutrality obſerved by the Swiſs, and the ſolemn, and repeated promiſes of their own government, burſt forty thouſand French ſoldiers, hot from the carnage, and dripping with the blood of other nations: They came to no new work of horror; they had murdered other innocents, and pillaged other temples, and waſted other lands: They could dye the ſilvered hair of the aged man with his own blood; they could curſe the tears of women, and maſh the

brains of the child, as he lifted up his meek eyes for mercy. In this country we live in ſuch a ſtate of ſecurity, that a deſcription of the horrors of war, ſeems rather the production of a romantic imagination, than a faithful picture of real events; and yet, on the continent of Europe, theſe ſcenes are of daily occurrence, and armies meet together, and thouſands of men lie bleeding on the ground, the dying with the dead, ſcreaming in agonies of pain, calling on their children, and their diſtant country, and their diſtant kindred, and begging mercy

of God, and utterly periſhing, their bodies gaſhed and torn, and their ſouls writhing with intolerable anguiſh.

In the midſt of ſuch horrid ſcenes as theſe, many actions of heroic valour characterized the laſt days of Switzerland; and ſhe died with her face ever turned to the enemy, ſlowly yielding, and fiercely ſtruggling to the laſt. In the final battle fought near the environs of the capital, Berne (fought, as ſaid the French, on their part, for the liberation of the Swiſs people),

one hundred and ſixty women were left dead upon the field of battle, mangled almoſt to atoms: Still greater numbers periſhed at Nurenburg, at Laupen, and Lengnau, fighting with madneſs for all they loved upon earth, and throwing their comely bleeding bodies before their huſbands, and their children. At Oberland, an old peaſant was obſerved in arms, fighting amidſt his three children, and his ſeven grandchildren; they ſuſtained the combat with inconceivable bravery, calling upon each other by name tenderly; the chil-

dren thronging about the old man, and guarding with their manly limbs the hoary head of their parent. They were all murdered; and in a moment of time, this valiant race was blotted from the book of living men.

In the midſt of all, wherever bravery, and wherever counſel, were needed, was the truly great, and intrepid Steigner; not now, as you might think, in the fulneſs of ſtrength, and youth, but an old man, of ſeventy years of age, who for half a century had ruled the

affairs of the republic with the utmoſt wiſdom, and juſtice, and found himſelf, at the cloſe of life, when eaſe, and retirement, crowned with honour, are ſo ſweet, found himſelf combating in the midſt of armed peaſants, for the exiſtence of his country. He had ever warned the Swiſs of the dangers to which they were expoſed, but unfortunately, in vain. At the moment of actual peril, his age, and his infirmities, would have allowed him to retire without diſgrace; but there are men who are ruled by ſomething within, which they dread more

than the judgment of the world. He who had guided his country in the days of her tranquillity, could not forſake her in her troubles: The miſeries of Switzerland made her doubly dear to this good man; and like a true leader of the people, he led them in the day of death, and battle. The people are not always ignorant who is fit to lead them; they ruſhed after him like the angel of the living God; and every Swiſs peaſant who was ſtabbed at his feet, caſt his lingering eyes on Steigner, and when he

ſaw him yet breathing, died in peace.

I ought perhaps to apologize to you for thus occupying your time from the pulpit with the praiſes of individuals; but I could not let ſuch an occaſion paſs, without ſaying a few words on ſo memorable a man. I paint to you the genius of the people, in ſhowing you the extraordinary characters to which ſuch an epoch gave birth. You ſee what a nation has been deſtroyed; you ſee the full extent of crime, for which the French have

become amenable to the whole human race. Beſides, too, if at any future time, it ſhall pleaſe Almighty God, to expoſe this country again to ſuch perils as thoſe from which we have recently eſcaped; if any nation ever ſpring up again, that ſhall mock at all living men, ſhall ſhiver to pieces crowns, and ſceptres, and hurl down princes, and potentates, and thrones, and dominations; and if there be in this church any young man, deſtined by his great talents to lead the people at ſuch an awful criſis; let him learn from the life of this illuſtri-

ous perſon, to deſpiſe every ſyſtem of temporizing policy, to ſee that there are times when magnanimity is prudence, when deſpair is wiſdom; like him, ever looking up to God, and guided by the light of beautiful, and manly principles, let him move forwards in one even tenor, through all times, and ſeaſons, and circumſtances, and events.

The vengeance which the French took of the Swiſs, for their determined oppoſition to the invaſion of their country, was deciſive, and terrible. The hiſtory of Europe

can afford no parallel of ſuch cruelty. To dark ages, and the moſt barbarous nations of the eaſt, we muſt turn for ſimilar ſcenes of horror, and perhaps muſt turn in vain. The ſoldiers of the infernal Scharenbourg, diſperſed over the country, carried fire, and ſword, and robbery, into the moſt tranquil, and hidden valleys of Switzerland: From the depth of ſweet retreats echoed the ſhriek of murdered men, ſtabbed in their humble dwellings, under the ſhadow of the high mountains, in the midſt of thoſe ſcenes of nature, which make

ſolemn, and pure the ſecret thoughts of man, and appal him with the majeſty of God. The peaſants who eſcaped could ſee in the midſt of the night, which they paſſed on the bare ground, their cottages, their implements of huſbandry, and the hopes of the future year, expiring in one cruel conflagration. The men were ſhot upon the ſlighteſt provocation; innumerable women, after being expoſed to the moſt atrocious indignities, were murdered, and their bodies thrown into the woods. In ſome inſtances this conduct was reſented; and for

ſymptoms of ſuch an honourable ſpirit, the beautiful town of Altsdorf was burnt to the ground, and a ſingle houſe left to ſhow where it had ſtood. The town of Stantz, a town peculiarly dear to the Swiſs, as it gave birth to Arnold of Melcthal, one of the founders of their liberty, was reduced to a heap of cinders. In this town, in the fourteenth century, Melcthal ſurpriſed, and took priſoner, the Auſtrian commander who had murdered his father; he forgave him, upon the ſimple condition of his not ſerving any more againſt the Swiſs Cantons.

When the French got poſſeſſion of this place, they burnt it to aſhes; not in a barbarous age, but now, yeſterday, in an age we call philoſophical; they burnt it, becauſe the inhabitants endeavoured to preſerve their liberty. Melcthal was a ſimple peaſant; the French are a mighty people, combined for the regeneration of Europe. Oh Europe, what doſt thou owe to this mighty people! dead bodies, ruinous heaps, broken hearts, waſte places, childleſs mothers, widows, orphans tears, endleſs confuſion, and unutterable woe. For this

mighty nation we have ſuffered ſeven years of unexampled wretchedneſs, a long period of diſcord, and jealouſy, and privation, and horror, which every reflecting man would almoſt wiſh blotted out from his exiſtence. By this mighty people the Swiſs have loſt their country; that country which they loved ſo well, that if they heard but the ſimple ſong of their childhood, tears would trickle down every manly face, and the hearts of intrepid ſoldiers would ſob even unto burſting. What, then, do you think all this is done with impunity?

Are the thunders of God dumb? Are there no lightnings in his right hand? Pauſe a little, I beg you, before you decide on the ways of Providence; tarry, and ſee what will come to paſs. There is a ſolemn, and awful courage in the human heart, placed there by God himſelf, to guard man againſt the tyranny of his fellows, and while this lives, the world is ſafe. There ſlumbers even now, perhaps, upon the mountains of Switzerland, ſome youthful peaſant, unconſcious of the ſoul he bears, that ſhall lead down theſe bold people from their

rocks, to ſuch deeds of courage as they have heard with their ears, and their fathers have declared unto them; to ſuch, as were done in their days, and in the old time before them, by Tell, by Melcthal, and by thoſe magnanimous ruſtics, who firſt taught fooliſh ambition to reſpect the wiſdom, and the ſpirit of ſimple men, righteouſly, and honeſtly ſtriving for every human bleſſing, and good.

Let me go on a little farther in this dreadful enumeration. More than thirty villages were ſacked

in the Canton of Berne alone; not only was all the produce of the preſent year deſtroyed, but as the cattle unfit for human food were ſlaughtered, and the agricultural implements burnt, the certainty of famine was entailed upon them for the enſuing year; at the end of all this military execution, civil exactions ſtill more cruel, and oppreſſive were begun; and under the forms of government, and law, the moſt unprincipled men gave looſe to their avarice, and rapacity, till Switzerland has ſunk at laſt under the complication of her misfor-

tunes, reduced to the loweſt ebb of miſery, and deſpair.

Is it, then, can it be neceſſary, after this narrative, to make any long, or urgent appeals to your feelings? If ever the misfortunes of man were a care to you; if ever you have ſacrificed any pleaſure to lighten the heavy heart; if a wretched face, and a wailing voice, have ever pierced your ſoul, and ſunk your gaiety to the duſt, and filled your eyes with tears, have mercy, I beg you, on theſe poor forſaken people. I do not aſk of

you much, but give them a little, and their hearts will ſing with joy; they have no bread, no ſhelter, no friends; they feel they have no right to petition you; but they fling themſelves down on their knees before you, and beg you, through the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, to have pity on them, or they muſt die: And yet, if any one of you had been wandering in their mountains, they would have entreated you kindly, and gently; if you had been ſick, they would have watched your bed; if you had been weary, they would have ſhel-

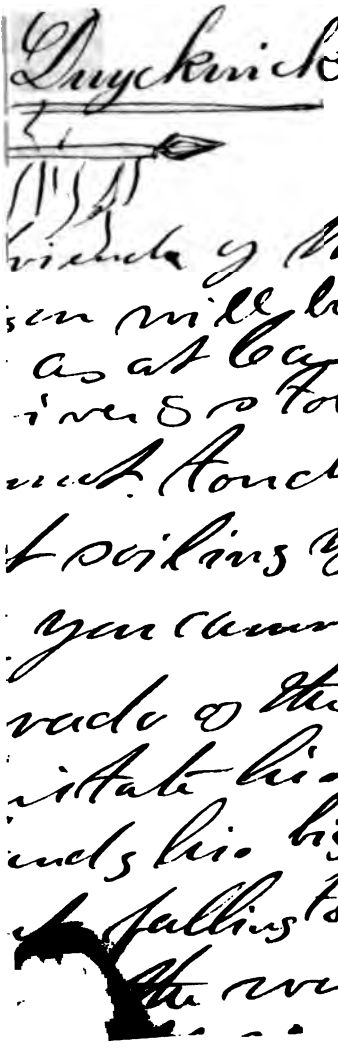
tered you in their cabins; if you had been hungry, their very children would have come to ſhare their food with you, and their little faces would have been clouded with ſorrow, till the countenance of the poor ſtranger within their gates was turned to mirth, and joy. Do not let theſe men periſh; but though you have heard in theſe latter days many tales of miſery, be not wearied with doing good; but taught by that power which has ever pity on you, learn ye to have pity on them.

The genuine ſoul of compaſſion is ſwift to figure, and to conceive; it glides into the body of the ſuffering wretch; it writhes with his agony, it faints with his hunger, it weeps with his tears, it bleeds with his blood, till, blind with the wiſe, and heavenly deluſion, it miniſters to its own fancied ſorrows, and labours for another ſelf. Forget, then, for a moment, that you are living in a free country, in affluent circumſtances, and under reſpected laws; put yourſelves in the ſituation of theſe poor peaſants; you would ſee your children daily

waſting before your eyes, for want of proper food; you would be forced to bear their looks; you would ſee the little ſpot where all your affections centred, the habitation of your forefathers, the pride of your life, broken down to a deſolation, and a deſert; you would ſit down on the ruins; you would remember the happy days of your infancy that you had paſſed there; you would think your country was no more, your kindred was dead in battle; you would think of all theſe things, and your heart would break.

My brethren, farewel. I have done. I have ſaid every thing in my power for theſe poor creatures; I have ſaid it with all my heart, and ſoul, for I abſolutely believe they are dying from hunger. I humbly crave ſome little charity for them: I beg you as Chriſtians, as good, and kind men, to turn your hearts towards their wretchedneſs; I beg you, as you hope for mercy from the good, and gracious Jeſus, as you hope to ſpend your latter days in peace, as you wiſh that your children in diſtant lands ſhould return home to you in good report, and

bleſs your eyes once more before death. If there be here a parent who feels the warning of age, and lingers in heart round his dear family; if there be a child that knows how to cheriſh the declining age of its parent; by all theſe hopes, by all theſe feelings, by all theſe paſſions, I ſolemnly entreat your mercy; and may the God of Heaven, and earth, and man, by teaching you to pity, give you the right to implore.



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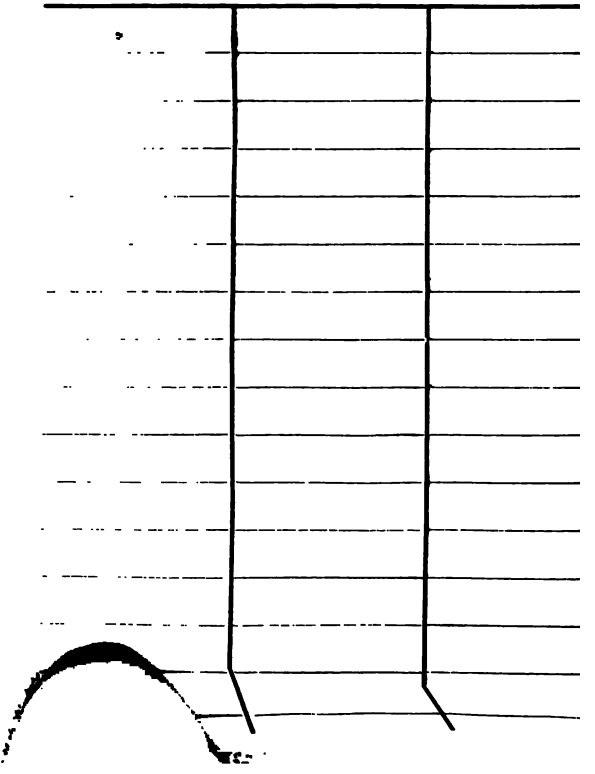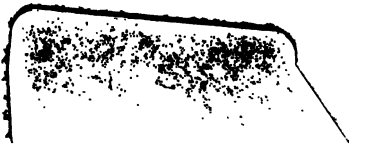
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